ABDU-R-RAHMAN ABU ZAYD

# AL-GHAZALI ON DIVINE PREDICATES AND THEIR PROPERTY



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Lahore - Pakistan

## *About the Book*

In Islam, the question of the Divine Attributes has been treated from various perspectives. In the beginning it was viewed primarily as a semantic and metaphysical problem. A later introduction, its logical aspect, however, was its most important side. The translator attempts to treat the problem with this logical aspect predominantly in mind. Limited both by the scope of this work and by the task of bringing this vast material into reasonable compass, he confines himself to the treatment of the problem as it unfolds in Islamic Peripatetic thought, and the Ash'arite school, with Ghazali being the major representative of the latter. He tests the validity of some of Ghazalī's statements in *Iqtiṣād* against the former schools and his findings in Plato and Aristotle.

*Iqtiṣād* is Ghazali's most sophisticated major work on Kālām. He himself holds *Iqtiṣād* in high esteem.



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من
كتاب الاقتصاد في الاعتقاد
حجة الاسلام
أبي حامد محمد بن محمد بن محمد الغزالي



SH. MUHAMMAD ASHRAF
PUBLISHERS, BOOKSELLERS & EXPORTERS
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# AL-GHAZALI
# ON DIVINE PREDICATES
## AND THEIR PROPERTIES

A CRITICAL AND ANNOTATED TRANSLATION OF THESE CHAPTERS IN AL-IQTISAD FIL-I'TIQAD

*BY*

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TO

THREE SUDANESE INTELLECTUALS

Muḥammad 'Umar Bashīr
Jamāl Muḥammad Aḥmad
Mahdī Mustafā al-Hādī

# INTRODUCTION

## I

## THE PROBLEM IN ITS HISTORICO-PHILOSOPHICAL CONTEXT

Much of what is found in Islamic philosophical thinking expresses conceptions similar to those held by other religions. A historico-philosophical treatment of the problem of the divine predicates or attributes (*ṣifāt*) would not be entirely complete, therefore, if it ignored the conceptions of these religions, especially given the contention that all the sects of Islam were influenced in this respect by Judaic and Christian thinking.[1] Consideration of the issue of divine predicates in other religions, however, must be left to subsequent studies.

In Islam, the question of the divine attributes has been treated from various perspectives. In the beginning it was viewed primarily as a semantic and metaphysical problem. A later introduction, its logical aspect, however, was its most important side. Our attempt, therefore, will treat the problem with this logical aspect predominantly in mind. Since we are limited both by the scope of this work and by the task of bringing this vast material into reasonable compass, we would confine ourselves to the treatment of the problem as it unfolds in Islamic peripatetic thought, and the Ash'arite school, with Ghazālī being the major representative of the latter. The validity of some of Ghazālī's statements in *Iqtiṣād* would

be tested against the former schools and our findings in Plato and Aristotle. Comparisons, made within the narrow limits we have set for this chapter, yield, we recognise, much discrepancy and even disharmony and contradiction, but we hope that the important doctrines will stand out clearly.

Clearly, Muslim thinkers recognised that they had a problem in the language of the Qur'ān. A close examination of any tract on dogmatics or the here-siologies of al-Ash'arī, al-Baghdādī, Shahrastānī, or Ibn Ḥazm yields two aspects of this problem. The first aspect, the semantic one, is the description of God. Terms which are used to describe God are the same terms which are used in ordinary speech to describe ordinary beings. In particular, the Qur'ānic language permits the use of anthropomorphical terms such as eye, hand, face, etc.,[2] and the present participle is used to designate certain aspects of the Divine activity. The second aspect, the ontological one, is the real significance of the language used to describe God. What is the relation between these divine attributes and the divine essence? Were those attributes God's essence, according to His essence or superadded to His essence? Definitely then, as Allard points out, the central problem was one of a "Revelation which God Himself has sent in a language that can be absorbed by men."[3]

Once the problem was recognised, other problems asserted themselves as necessary corollaries. These problems will be discussed presently. Some Muslim thinkers, however, thought they found the solution in the doctrine of *tā'wīl* or allegorical interpretation of these terms used in the Qur'ān to describe God.





Others sought to accept these predicates and somehow avoid the dangers of allegorical interpretation. Still a third group took them literally. But this did not mark the end of the problem because the logical consequences of both denial and affirmation of these attributes could not be escaped.

The group that relied most heavily on allegorical interpretation were the Mu'tazilah. This was necessary if their denial of the existence of real attributes[4] in God—to safeguard His unity—were to be maintained. The attributists, however, were two groups. There were those who accepted the real attributes and thus were forced to substitute the doctrine of *bilā kayf*,[5] i.e. without questioning how and without need for *tā'wīl*, and those who took the terms predicated of God in the Qur'ān literally and were thus abusively labelled *mushabbihah*,[6] i.e. likeners.

We, therefore, move to examine the problem against three of Ghazālī's assertions: (1) that God is existent, eternal *a parte ante*, eternal *a parte post*; He is not a substance (*jawhar*), not a composite body and neither is He an accident (*'araḍ*), nor is He defined; He is not in a direction; He is seen and is knowable; God is one;[7] (2) that God is knowing, powerful, living, willing, hearing, seeing, and speaking;[8] and (3) that these seven attributes are not the essence but are superadded to the essence. The Maker of the world is knowing according to knowledge, living according to life, powerful according to power, and so is the case in the rest of the attributes.[9]

An as yet undeclared purpose of this chapter is to show also that the approach and material dealt with in the *Iqtiṣād* is similar to the material and approach

in *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah* (*Destruction of the Philosophers*). In the *Iqtiṣād* we find a twofold conception of the unity of God. This twofold conception is also found in the *Tahāfut* and, although it is there stated as that of al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā, we know that Ghazālī is not objecting to the concept itself as he is objecting to the danger involved in the methods employed to prove it, and hence the chiding tone in the use of such terms as *'alā aṣlihim* and *'alā maslakihim*, i e. according to their premise and according to their method.

The twofold conception of God's unity is stated by Ghazālī in the *Iqtiṣād* as follows: Firstly, God's unity means that "God is one which means the negation of anything other than He and the affirmation of His essence."[10] This echoes what he says in the *Tahāfut*, viz. that the philosophers were unable "to prove that God is one, and that it is not permissible to suppose two Necessary Beings each of whom is without cause."[11] Secondly, the term "one," he tells us in the *Iqtiṣād*, means the denial of plurality in the sense that by "one" is meant that:

He does not accept divisibility, i.e. He has no quantity, neither definition nor magnitude. It also means that He has no equal in rank and absolutely no equal (*lā nid*) in any manner. He has no contrary (*ḍid*), for what is understood by contrary is that which alternates with a thing in the same locus, but God has no locus for He is without contrary. By having no equal (*nid*) we mean that all that which is other than He is created by Him, for if He has an equal, it would be either like Him from all aspects or higher than He is or lower than He is [i.e. Ghazāli negates duality, *ithnayniyyah*]. God is more perfect and has no equal in essence (*ḥaqīqah*) or attributes.[12]

This second concept is repeated in a slightly differ-





rent form in the *Tahāfut*. It is important to note again that, in the *Tahāfut*, the statements are made as those of the philosopher and that Ghazālī's objection to them, we think, is one of method rather than substance. The denial of plurality in God's essence is stated there as:

Plurality comes to the essence from five aspects: (1) being receptive to division whether actually or conceptually; (2) from the intellectual division of a thing into two different concepts, not quantitively, like the division of a body into matter (*hayūlā*) and form (*ṣūrah*); (3) plurality through attributes by the supposition of knowledge, power, and will, for if the existence of such attributes were necessary, necessary existence would be common to both [God's] essence and these attributes, thereby negating unity; (4) an intellectual plurality resulting from the composition of genus and differentia; (5) the plurality of the essence and existence.[13]

The same twofold conception of God's unity is found in al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā. In al-Fārābī the terms "The First"[14] or "The First Existent"[15] (*al-Awwal* and *al-Mawjūd al-Awwal*) are used to designate "God," although the term "one" is also used. Al-Fārābī's conception of God's unity is stated as follows: Firstly, God's unity means that he is:

(1) without any defect, that there is no existence which is more perfect or prior to His and there is no existence which is more ancient than His or on the same level, and, therefore, He could not possibly receive His existence from it; He is totally different by His essence from anything other than He is; (2) He is not dependent in His existence on another being; (3) He has no contrary (*ḍid*) because the existence of a being contrary to another means that they are on the same level of existence, and, furthermore, the perfection of the existence of any being that has a contrary is achieved only when that contrary is annihilated. God is unique.[16]

Secondly, it means that:

(1) God is not divisible in His essence as in a definition. I mean that He is not divisible into parts which make His substance, and that is because the parts of the definition of His essence cannot possibly point to their opposite parts in His substance. For if this were the case, the parts which make His substance would have been the cause of His existence the way the concepts to which the parts of the definition point constitute the cause of the *definitum* or the way matter and form cause the existence of that which subsists by them; (2) if God's essence is not divisible in [the manner described above], He is even far removed from quantitive divisibility.[17]

Echoing al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā's conception of God's unity is stated in *al-Najāt* and *al-Ishārāt wa al-Tanbihāt* to mean the following: Firstly, God's unity means:

(1) it is not permissible that there be two from whom one necessary being is produced; (2) there should be no multiplicity in the Necessary Being; (3) the Necessary Being by His essence can not be a necessary being through another . . . for what is made necessary through something else is posterior to that something else and depends upon it.[18]

Secondly, God's unity means that:

(1) God's essence is simple in the sense that His essence has no principles such as the parts of the quality, parts of the definition or formula which together may cause the Necessary Being to exist whether these are like matter and form or in some other manner such as being parts of a formula which explains the meaning of His name and thereby these parts would point to a thing which in existence differs essentially from another thing; (2) the Necessary Being is incorporeal, not matter of bodies, not form of a body, not intellectual matter for an intellectual form, and neither is He an intellectual form in intellectual matter. He is not divisible into quantity or principle or in definition (*qawl*).[19]

This concept of the unity of God is an elaboration





on the embryonic Qur'ānic principle "Naught is there anything like Him" (*laysa kamithlihī shay'*), and both Muslim philosophers and theologians strived to reconcile this principle with other obviously anthropomorphic terms. The methods, however, differed. Now, by combining this Qur'ānic principle with the philosophical principle of the incorporeality of God, the three men arrived at the idea that God is indefinable and indivisible which means the exclusion of the genus and differentia. How did they all arrive at this concept of absolute simplicity of God, a concept which seems to be responsible for the rejection of the attributes by al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, and the Mu'tazilah?

We should now turn to Plato and Aristotle as the latter is interpreted by al-Fārābī and see how the problem is dealt with in their works, for both al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā base themselves on them in this respect and in the case of al-Fārābī, at least, there is an attempt to try to bridge the gap between Plato and Aristotle which has been epitomised in *al-Jam' bayn ra'yey al-Ḥakīmayn*.

In his *Dialogues* Plato treats God as either one of the ideas or as a supreme idea and, therefore, only through the understanding of that treatment can we reconstruct Plato's notion of God.

In the *Phaedo*, Plato describes the ideas as "simple" and "unchanging."[20] In the *Republic* they are said to exist each as a unity.[21] In the *Parmenides*, Socrates, Plato's spokesman, tells of a distinction between the ideas and the things that partake of them.[22] In the *Sophist*, the ideas are described as incorporeal.[23] In the *Timaeus*, the idea is said to be:

Immovably the same forever; it cannot become younger or

older by time, nor can it be said that it came into being in the past, or has come into being now, or will come into being in the future; nor is it subject at all to any of those states which affect moving and sensible things and of which generation is the cause.[24]

Along with such predicates as simple, unchanging, existent, forever the same, and incorporeal, which Plato uses to describe God, he also uses such predicates as good[25] and "wise . . . for that is a great name which belongs to God alone."[26] How does Plato reconcile such predication with his conception of the simplicity of the ideas?

In the *Parmenides*, Plato says:

> But tell me, Zeno, do you not further think that there is an idea of likeness, detached and existing by itself, and an opposite idea, which is the essence of unlikeness, and that in these two you and I and all other things to which we apply the term may participate—things which participate in likeness become in that degree and manner like; and so far as they participate in unlikeness become in that degree unlike; or again are both like and unlike in the degree in which they participate in both? And even though all things partake of both opposites, and be both like and unlike to themselves by reason of this participation, where is the wonder?[27]

It is clear then that Plato does not object to describing sensible objects by opposite terms such as likeness and unlikeness, because sensible objects are composite. But of the ideas which, we are told, are simple, it seems, no opposite term should be predicated because ideas do not at any time change. This is so, for clearly, as Plato says:

> The same thing cannot act or be acted upon in the same part or in relation to the same thing at the same time, in contrary ways; and, therefore, whenever this contradiction occurs in things apparently the same, we know that they are really not the same, but different.[28]





But since Plato himself has predicated certain terms of the ideas, what are these terms to be considered? Plato talks of ideas which are capable of "intermixture"[29] and others which are not, We can, therefore, conclude that Plato does think that there are terms which can be predicated of God who is either one of the ideas or a being above the ideas.

In a chapter entitled *"al-Muthul al-Aflāṭūnīyyah wa mawqif Arisṭū minhā,"*[30] al-Fārābī points out that Aristotle stood firmly opposed to Plato's incorporeal beings which are the ideas or, as al-Fārābī describes them, "the divine ideas". Excepting this, in his attempt at harmonising the thoughts of Plato and Aristotle, al-Fārābī mentions that in his *Athālūjiya* (Theology), Aristotle affirms the existence of spiritual forms" which are in God. God, according to al-Fārābī's interpretation of Aristotle, is described as unlike anything in His quiddity (*annīyyatihī*), as indivisible, immutable, and unalterable.[31] Aristotle permits the description of God by terms which are natural, logical, and univocal.[32] But when these terms are applied to God or to the "spiritual forms," i.e. the ideas, they are used in a manner different from their application to ordinary beings. What al-Fārābī here calls natural terms (*alfāẓ ṭabī'iyyah*) are those terms which Plato calls "not opposite" as in describing man, for example, by "animal" and "rational".

Although we know now, on al-Fārābī's authority, that Aristotle permits predicating univocal terms (*alfāẓ mutawaṭi'ah*) of God, we should seek confirmation of this assertion in Aristotle. Does Aristotle's indivisibility of God exclude the genus and differentia

as is clearly the case with Ghazālī, Ibn Sīnā, and al-Fārābī? Aristotle enumerates four predicables which are either genera or a species or properties or accidents.[33] What of these four is to be predicated of God and who is said to be one and incorporeal by Aristotle? Through the understanding of Aristotle's structure of the one, we expect to arrive at an answer. Now, accidents must be eliminated for they are to be found only in corporeal beings. According to Aristotle, the term "one" has many meanings:

for in general those things that do not admit of division are called one in so far as they do not admit of it, e.g. if two things are indistinguishable *qua* man, they are one kind of man; if *qua* animal, one kind of animal; if *qua* magnitude, one kind of magnitude.[34]

The question is whether Aristotle considers God as these beings which could be called one even though they are divisible into quantity, substance, and accident. Some things are called one because of the unity of their definition, e.g. man, although every definition is divisible into genus and differentia. Aristotle predicates many terms of God such as the "one,"[35] eternal and unchangeable,[36] the good and the beautiful,[37] causing motion,[38] and thinking.[39] As al-Fārābī points out, such predicates are used by Aristotle to describe God in a manner different from their application to corporeal beings. Things which are called one are divisible but God as an incorporeal being is indivisible. Things which are described as moving are moved but God is a prime mover; things which are called thinking think of an object external to themselves but God, when He thinks, "thought and object of thought are the same."[40] These predicates must fall





within Aristotle's previously mentioned four predicables. God's indivisibility excludes parts or divisibility into substance and accident or matter and form. In the *Topica*, however, Aristotle argues that *genera* and *species* have no real existence and hence they could not be prior to the subject defined,[41] or be its cause.[42] What causes one species to break up into numerically many individuals is matter but the "primary essence has no matter, for it is complete reality. So the unmovable first mover (God) is one both in definition and in number."[43] Now we realise that Aristotle includes under "immovable mover" the heavenly spheres, but these are themselves moved by an accidental motion by something else,"[44] while God is absolutely immovable. And in any case these principles are immaterial and hence the differences between them are specific differences, i.e. each of them is a unique species although their genus is common. But we have pointed out that Aristotle reminds us that genera and species have no real existence[45] and, therefore, their predication of God does not introduce real division in His essence. The argument that God's case, then, is not different from that of any *difinitum*, for a definition implies a distinction between matter and form, despite Aristotle's assertion that God is immaterial, would be answered by him that matter is not necessarily sensible. It is also intelligible[46]

Ibn Sīnā, on the other hand, agrees with Aristotle when he says that the principle mover cannot be many. The other heavenly spheres, also, are movable. The movable mover, however, is numerically "one" and he moves the rest of the *kurāt al-samā,'*[47] i e. the heavenly spheres which are immaterial[48] (*mufāriqah*

*lil-māddah*). He also affirms Aristotle's idea that the genus and species which are universals have no real existence (*lā kullī 'āmmiy fil wujūd*):

no universal is general in existence, for the existence of a universal in actuality is only in the intellect and that is the form which exists in the intellect, whose actual or potential relation to every single thing is the same.[49]

In the logic of the *Najāt*, Ibn Sīnā classifies five universal predicables, four of which we have already shown cannot be predicated of God in the ordinary sense. These five predicables (*al-alfāẓ al-khamsah*) are: genera, species, differentiae, property (*khāṣṣah*), and the accidents.[50] Of these, property is rather problematic. Starting with the statement that the First Necessary Being is simple, indivisible, and free from matter and its attachments.[51] Ibn Sīnā argues that the divine predicates are properties which, when applied to God, imply no multiplicity or divisibility of the essence of the "one".[52] But Ibn Sīnā predicates them in a special manner: God, for example, is willing, knowing, living, powerful, *li dhātihī*,[53] i.e. in virtue of His essence. This is so, says Ibn Sīnā, for,

when it is said that God is Intellect, is intellected, and intellects, this means in actuality God's existence, from which matter and its attachments are excluded and ***a certain relation is posited***. Therefore, when we say the *First*, we only mean the relation of His existence to the whole.[54]

This echoes Aristotle's statement:

And life also belongs to God; for the actuality of thought is life, and God is that actuality; and God's self-dependent actuality is life most good and eternal. We say, therefore, that God is a living being, eternal, most good, so that life and duration continuous and eternal belong to God; for this *is* God.[55]

Explaining this further, Ibn Sīnā asserts that





ordinary beings have life because of two faculties which make life possible for them; they will, because of an intention, but His knowledge is His will[56] for the reality which God intellects is His very knowledge, power and will[57] because what issues from God issues in virtue of His essence (*li dhātihī*) and does not entail divisibility or multiplicity in His essence for the "First Cause" is numerically one, is immaterial and pure intellect.[58] What Ibn Sīnā meant by "a certain relation"[59] could be interpreted as what is known as positive predicates or attributes of action, for he also refers to what he calls "*Ṣifāt ma'a as-salb*"[60] or negative attributes. He explains this kind of predicates as follows: "if someone describes *The First* as 'ṣubstance,' he would mean His existence with the negation of His being in a substratum and if he describes Him as *The One*, he would mean the Existent Himself with the negation of His divisibility into quantity, the negation of definition, and the negation of a partner (*sharīk*) to him."[61] This is Ibn Sīnā's position as we can see and as stated in *al-Najāt*.

The Ash'arites are represented by Ghazālī. They reject the views of Ibn Sīnā, viz. that the attributes are the essence, for, according to Ghazālī, this would be tautological,[6] i.e. tantamount to saying God is God. We have already quoted Ghazālī as saying that God's attributes are eternal and superadded to the essence,[63] and he forewarns us that these attributes are not the essence but rather point to the essence. In the *Tahafūt*, however, he attacks both al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā and their arbitrary conception of the simplicity of God[64] which forced them to deny to God real attributes. This arbitrariness, Ghazālī points out

stems from their doctrine of *Wājib al-Wujūd*, Necessary Being,[65] which they have acquired from their conception of the *necessary* and the *possible* and not from the distinction between the *eternal* and the *contingent*. Ghazālī's understanding of the doctrine of the Necessary Being is that it furnishes the proof for the existence of a being who is without a cause but not without composition if their conception of the unity of the essence rejects the multiplicity of attributes,[66] which are eternal. He urges the philosophers to set aside the doctrine of the Necessary Being and the doctrine of simplicity because it is vulnerable[67] and to see whether the attributes are imcompatible with a being who has no cause. He argues that there is no incompatibility, a conclusion he draws from his enumeration of three types of relation[68] that may exist between God's essence and the attributes: (*a*) both essence and attributes are independent from each other; (*b*) they depend on each other; (*c*) the essence is not dependent on the attributes but the latter are. His choice is the third kind of relationship. Thus he makes by providing his own conception of the expression Necessary Being which he explains as meaning having no efficient cause,[69] and "just as the mind is capable of intellecting an eternal Existent who has no cause, it is also capable of intellecting an eternal Existent who has attributes and who has no cause for the existence of both His essence and His attributes."[70]

Ghazālī concludes his discussion of the problem in his usual uncompromising tone and in scathing terms by belittling the intellectual methods and proofs of metaphysics.





## *Notes*

1. It is the consensus of Western scholarship that this is the case. See particularly Wolfson, "The Muslim Attributes and the Christian Trinity," *Harvard Theological Review*, 49 (1956), 1-18.
2. M. Allard, *Le probleme des attributs divins*, Imprimerie catholique, Beyrouth, 1965, p. 14.
3. Ibid.
4. Shahrastānī, *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, Leipzig, Otto Harrassowitz, 1923, p. 30.
5. Ibid, pp. 65-6.
6. Ibid , p. 65, 75-6. They are also known as the corporealists (*Mujassimah*), See *Maqālāt* of al-Ash'arī, Ritter, 1963, p. 207.
7. Ghazālī, *Iqtiṣād Fil-I'tiqād*, Ankara, 1962, p. 4
8. Ibid., p. 79.
9. Ibid., p. 129.
10. Ibid., p. 73.
11. *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah*, problem V, ed. Sulaymān Dunya, Cairo, 1947, p. 133; cf. *Maqāṣid al-Falāsifah*, where Ghazālī enumerates twelve points concerning the Necessary Being, ed. Dunya, Cairo, 1961.
12. *Iqtiṣād*, pp. 73-5.
13. *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah*, V, pp. 136-9.
14. Abū Naṣr al-Fārābī, *Kitāb as-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, ed. F M. Najjār, Beirut, 1964, p. 42.
15. *Kitāb Ā'rā' ahl al Madinah al-Fāḍilah*, 2nd ed., ed. al-Kurdī, Cairo, 1948, p. 2.
16. (*a*) *As-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, pp. 42-3.
    (*b*) *Ā'rā' ahl al-Madinah*, pp. 4-5.
17. (*a*) *As-Siyāsah al-Madaniyyah*, p. 44.
    (*b*) *Ā'rā' ahl al-Madinah*, p. 8.
18. Ibn Sinā' *al-Najāt Fi al-Ḥikmah al-Manṭiqiyyah wa al-Ṭabi'ah al-Ilāhiyyah*, ed. al-Kurdī, Cairo, 1938, Part II, p. 227.
19. (*a*) *al-Najāt*, pp. 227-8.
    (*b*) *al-Ishārāt*, p. 278, where Ibn Sinā says: That the Necessary Being participates with nothing in any generic or specific concept, that His essence has no definition because it has no genus nor differentia. See Ṭusī's commentary, pp. 472-3.
20. *Phaedo*, 432-78d.
21. *Rep.*, VI, 369-507.
22. *Parm.*, 673-130b.
23. *Soph.*, 398-246b.
24. *Tim.*, 723-4-38a.
25. Ibid., 717-29e.
26. *Phaedrus*, 188-278d.
27. *Parm.*, 671-2-129a

28. *Rep.*, IV, 289-436b.
29: *Seph.*, 407-253b, c.d.
30. al-Fārābī, *Kitāb al Jam' bayn rā'yay al-Ḥakimayn*, ed. Nadīr, Beirut, 1960, pp. 105-9.
31. Ibid., p. 106: also Aristotle, *Phys.*, VIII, 10, 267b, 25-6, *De Caelo*, 19, 279a, 19-21.
32. Ibid., p. 107.
33. *Topica*, I, 101b, 17-25.
34. *Metaphysica*, 1016b, 3-7.
35. Ibid., 987a, 20-3.
36. Ibid, 987b, 16-7.
37. Ibid., 1078a, 31.
38. Ibid., 1072b, 1-3.
39. Ibid., 1072b, 18-22.
40. Ibid., 1072b, 22.
41. *Topica*, VI-r, 141a, 26-7.
42. *Anal. post.*, 11-10, 93b, 38-29.
43. *Metaphysica*, XII-I, 1074a, 35-7.
44. *Phys*, VIII-6, 259b, 29.
45. *Metaphysica*, XII-5, 1071a., 19.
46. Ibid., VIII-6, 1045a, 34.
47. *al-Najāt*, p. 266.
48. Ibid., p. 267.
49. Ibid., p. 221.
50. Ibid., p. 8 *et passim*.
51. Ibid., p. 244.
52. Ibid., pp. 249-251.
53. Ibid., p. 250.
54. Ibid., p. 251.
55. Aristotle, *Metaphysica*, XII-7, 1072b, 26-8.
56. *al-Nājāt*, p. 250.
57. Ibid., p. 274.
58. Ibid, pp. 274-5
59. See note 54.
60. *al-Najat*, p. 251.
61. Ibid.
62. *Iqtiṣād*, p. 132.
63. See notes 7, 8, 9.
64. *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah*, VI, p. 147.
65. Ibid., pp. 147-50.
66. Ibid., p. 147.
67. Ibid., p. 149.
68. Ibid., p. 148.
69. Ibid., p. 150.
70. Ibid.



# II

## AL-IQTISĀD FIL-I'TIQĀD, METHOD AND IMPORTANCE

Although Ghazālī may have huried criticism against *kalām*, he retained a *mutakallim* side to his complex person. As a *mutakallim*, he dealt with the major issues of *kalām* which al-Ash'arī had treated and defended, except that at Ghazālī's hands these issues receive a fresh treatment, more thorough, more comprehensive, and more systematic than in any of his predecessors. Particularly new is his treatment of these issues as problems of logical judgment. Ghazālī was the first *mutakallim* to use Aristotelian logic to defend matters of dogma, a method which al-Juwaynī had attempted without exhausting its potentials.[1] This "new" method is abundantly demonstrated in Ghazālī's *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah* and *al-Radd 'alā al-Bāṭinīyyah*, both of which he considers tracts on dogmatics.[2] It appears also in *Qawā'id al-Adillah* and *al-Risālah al-Qudsīyyah* and in this work with which we are dealing, *al-Iqtiṣād*.

In defending the use of logic to prove issues of a dogmatic nature, Ghazālī says:

But logic is not a monopoly of theirs [i.e. the philosophers]; rather it is the principle (*aṣl*) which we call in the art of *kalām* the "Book of Logical Reasoning" (*Kitāb al-Naẓar*). They altered its expressions to sound impressive. We may also call it the "Book of Dialectics" (*Jadal*) or we may call it intellectual perception. When a dilettante hears the term "logic," he thinks it is a mysterious art which the *mutakallimūn* do not know and

only philosophers have access to it.[3]

Numerous examples can be given to show Ghazālī's complete acceptance of logic as a sound method for acquiring truth. He says in *Maqāṣid al-Falāsifah*:

...as for logical judgments, they are mostly correct and are rarely erroneous, but they [i.e. the philosophers] differ from the *People of the Truth* concerning them only in terminology and applications but not in meaning and conclusions.[4]

This final acceptance of Aristotelian logic is exemplified in *Iqtiṣād* by Ghazālī's use of categorical syllogisms as distinct from hypothetical syllogisms which are certain truth-functional arguments. It may be said that what are traditionally known as syllogisms are arguments wherein a categorical statement is derived as a conclusion from two categorical statements as premises, the three statements being so related that there are altogether only three terms, each of which appears in two of the statements. Ghazālī uses what he calls valid syllogisms. A valid syllogism is said to be of such form as to be incapable of leading from true premises to a false conclusion. Two examples of his syllogisms run as follows:

(*a*) Every *originated* being requires *a cause* for its origination,
the world is *originated*,
therefore the world has *a cause*.[5]

(*b*) Any *masterly work* proceeds from *a powerful agent*,
the world is a *masterly work*,
therefore the world proceeds from *a powerful agent*.[6]

Then Ghazālī explains the terminology used and at the end offers the demonstration. Each premise is re-





peated and proved. In the major premise of example (*a*), after pointing out that existence is fundamentally real, Ghazālī admits the existence of beings such as bodies and accidents, which can be perceived "by the senses,"[7] and its reality does not have to be demonstrated. But the major premise also includes the existence of a being (i.e. a cause which is not perceived by the senses). It exists, none the less, and the world exists through it and through its power.[8] To prove this latter assertion Ghazālī merely explains the meaning of the terms "cause" and "being which requires a cause," and "if the opponent understands the terms, his intellect would necessarily accept [the explanation]."[9] He then deals with the minor premise, "the world is originated". This is not perceived by the senses and hence must be proven.[10] After pointing out that by the world he means nothing other than composite bodies, he develops his demonstration in the form of another syllogism:

No body is free from originated things;
all bodies which are not free from originated things
are originated;
therefore every body is originated.[11]

Ghazālī dwells at length on the major premise which he proves in two sections. The first section is that *movement* and *rest* are real things and "the substance is never free from them."[12] The second section is that both *movement* and *rest* are originated things. As for *movement* and *rest*, Ghazālī says that this is a superfluous issue for a book like *Iqtiṣād* and that it does not deserve all the attention it received in books on *Kalām*,[13] for no sane person would doubt the existence

of accidents in himself, such as pain, sickness, hunger, thirst, and other states. The observation of the external world would also provide similar findings, viz. that everything is in constant change and that such change is contingent. But since his opponents, concerning this point, are the philosophers, Ghazālī feels he should discuss it because they do not concede the contingency of the world although they concede that the bodies in the world are divided into (*a*) heavenly spheres which are perpetually in motion, their individual motions being originated though they are eternally and sempiternally in succession, and (*b*) the four elements which exist in the sublunar world and which share an eternal matter that gives subsistence to their forms and accidents, and the latter two being originated. The four elements, however, are never free from originated forms because from their originated mixtures are formed the elements, plants, and animated beings [14] Ghazālī says that a lengthy discussion is not necessary to prove what is self-evident but for form's (*rasm's*) sake he would discuss these issues. Proving what is self-evident obscures issues rather than sheds light on them.[15] He realises that what he calls self-evident meets with two objections. He spends some time explaining the second of these objections through the explanation of the expression, "an accident which subsists in a locus". This way, Ghazālī feels he has clearly demonstrated the major premise of the second syllogism, "the world is originated," for it is precisely against the philosopher's assertion that the world is not originated, that Ghazālī states the minor premise of his second syllogism and it is on this that the whole thesis rests, and





it is here that a real demonstration appears and it is an ***argumentum ad absurdum***. As a matter of fact, the conclusion of Ghazāli is that "the truthfulness of our premise has thus become evident by means of the third method of reasoning mentioned in the fourth preliminary at the beginning of the book."[16] The third method in the fourth preliminary states that the opponent is free to contest the validity of the conclusion by refusing to admit the premise.[17] This freedom which he grants to the opponent is "honest, but reflects fragility in his rational argument."[18] For Ghazālī, no discrepancy exists in so far as the opponent would admit the reality of the origination of the world, a postulate necessary for the very groundwork of Ghazālī's rational system. This postulate, he argues, is known through reason without any recourse to the revealed word (*shar'*) being necessary.[19] But, implicitly, it is *shar'* which imposes on reason the truthfulness of the postulate. Ghazālī concludes his demonstration of the origination of the world by various verses from the Qur'ān because for him that is all self-evident[20] and if he demonstrates what is self-evident, it is for the sake of logic and out of sheer desire to consolidate the system he is defending. In ending his first treatise by the Qur'ānic verse: "if there were gods other than *Allah* in them [i.e. in heavens and earth], they would be decaying."[21] This, for Ghazālī, is the unanswerable proof and one should not seek further demonstration. This is not mere literary analysis or mere impression.[22] It reflects the conviction of Ghazālī's inner self. Although he argues that even prophets were not sent to prove the existence of God and the origination of the world, but

were sent to teach His unity, we find elsewhere that he permits arguing for the existence of God when the arguments are drawn from and sustained by the Qur'ān.[23] Such demonstration, he concedes, is directed toward the mass of believers. In the *Qisṭās*,[24] the same verse is presented as a model of a conditional conjunctive syllogism or ***mīzān at-talāzum***. All this of course is a way of showing that reason alone cannot reach absolute certainty, for reason can help only in taking positions *vis-a-vis* the revealed word of God. For Ghazālī, then, reason must be used to reach a golden mean or middle course in belief, not absolute certainty. This is clear in his arguments in the seventh, eighth, and ninth thesis of the first part,[25] and the second and third parts on attributes and their properties.[26] There Ghazālī's sentences become longer, inflated, and his satisfaction becomes apparent. But even here, the explanation of the terms takes precedence over the demonstration, and Ghazālī asserts with confidence what he believes to be the golden mean in belief or the middle course which happens to be that of the Ash'arites.[27]

The importance of *Iqtiṣād* lies in this extensive use of syllogistic logic and "the attention to objections from a neo-Platonic standpoint,"[28] both of which can be seen in the proofs of the existence of God and the *visio beatifica*, which in Montgomery Watt's judgment are in fact Ghazālī's greatest contribution to the latter development of Islamic theology and accentuate the fact that what Ghazālī did was to "effect a complete fusion of the Greek and Islamic intellectual traditions."[29]

*Iqtisād* is Ghazālī's most sophisticated major work





on *kalām*. Its full name, *al-Iqtiṣād Fil-I'tiqād*, has been variously translated, but the most appropriate translation is *The Golden Mean in Belief*. Ghazālī himself holds *Iqtiṣād* in high esteem and, whenever the occasion calls for the proofs of the creed, he refers to it. His own evaluation of the book can be found in many of his works. Twice in the *Iḥyā'*, Ghazālī mentions *Iqtiṣād* as the book containing more adequate proofs than are normally found in other works of the theologians, and as a work which reveals the essence of the science of *kalām*.[30] In Ghazālī's own words :

> As for the proofs of the creed we have set them in *al-Risālah al-Qudsīyyah* in about twenty pages and it is a chapter of the *Kitāb Qawā'id al-Adillah* of the *Iḥyā'* and as for their proofs, with more thoroughness and sophistication in raising questions and objections, we have set them in *The Golden Mean in Belief*, in some hundred pages. It is a book devoted entirely to the very essence of the science of the theologians, but it is more adequate in its proofs and more apt to knock at the doors of knowledge than the scholastic jargon which is normally met in the works of the theologians.[31]

Although Ghazālī does not mind that the mass of the believers may read it, he still considers it his single most important statement on the creed. Discussing *Kalām* in the *Jawāhir*, he says that he has written two treatises on *kalām* explaining the creed "on two levels, calling the lower level *al-Risālah al-Qudsīyyah*, and the higher level *al-Iqtiṣād Fil-I'tiqād*."[32]

## Notes

1. Hanna al-Fakuri and Khalil al-Jarra, *Tārīkh al-Falsafa al-'Arabiyyah*, Dār al-Ma'ārif, Beirut, 1957, Vol. II, p. 267.

2. Ghazālī, *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān*, Kurdistan Press, Cairo, 1329 A.H., 1st ed. p. 26.

3. *Tahâfut al-Falâsifah*, ed. S. Duniya, Cairo, 1947, p. 45.
4. *Maqâṣid al-Falâsifah, Logic*, ed S Duniya, Dâr al-Ma'ârif, Cairo, 1961, p. 32.
5. *Iqtiṣâd*, p. 24.
6. Ibid , p. 30 Our translation Chapter I, p. 1.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid., p. 25.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid., p. 26.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid., p. 27.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., p. 28.
16. Ibid., p. 34.
17. Ibid., p. 17.
18. Farid Jabre, *La notion de certitude selon Ghazâli*, Librairie philosophique, Paris, 1958, p. 83.
19. *Iqtiṣâd*, pp 210-3.
20. Ibid., p. 79.
21. Ibid.
22. Farid Jabre, op. cit. p. 83.
23. *Iljâm al-'Awâm*, p. 27 ; F. Jabre, op. cit., p. 83.
24. *Al-Qisṭâs al-Mustaqim*, ed. Musṭafa al-Qabbânî ad-Dimashqi, Maṭba'at at-Taraqqi, Cairo, 1900, 1st ed., pp. 50-1.
25. *Iqtiṣâd*, pp. 42 ff.
26. Ibid., pp. 79 ff., see our translation Chapter I, p. 1, and Chapters VII, VIII.
27. Ibid., pp. 129-33.
28. W. Montgomery Watt, *Muslim Intellectual, A Study of al-Ghazali*, Edinburgh University Press, 1963, p. 123.
29. Ibid.
30. *Ihyâ' 'Ulûm ad-Din*, Lajnat Nashr al-Thaqâfah al-Islâmîyyah, Cairo, 1356 A.H., Vol. I, pp. 88, 169.
31. *Al-Arba in fi Uṣûl ad-Din*, p. 25, cited by Dunya, p. 128, and Watt, p. 119.
32. *Jawâhir al-Qur'ân*, p. 25.

## *A Note on the Footnote System*

The reader will encounter in the text of the translation two systems of footnotes. When the number is followed by a letter "a" as in 5a, for example, such a number refers to a variant reading to be found in the Appendix. When a number is not followed by a letter, the reference is to a quoted work, the explanation of a term or an idea of a general elucidation of the text, in other words a regular footnote.

In the Appendix, however, there are three sets of two letters each, AK, AS and BA which we are using to refer to the three manuscripts utilised in preparing this translation. When, for example, the symbol AK-30 appears in the Appendix, the number 30 refers to the folio number of the particular manuscript.



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Although in preparing this text I have used the manuscripts referred to in the Appendix, the 1962 Ankara edition of *Iqtiṣâd* of Professors Hussayn Attay and Ibrahim Cubukou of the Ankara Universitesi, Ilahiyat Facultesi, has been very helpful, and I am grateful for their allowing me its use.

## CONTENTS





*Chapter I*

# THE SECOND PIVOTAL POINT, CONCERNING THE ATTRIBUTES

It contains seven assertions. We assert that God is knowing, powerful, living, willing, hearing, seeing, and speaking. These are seven attributes from which the consideration of two matters arises. One of them is what is proper to each attribute separately, and the second is what is common to all the attributes. Let us begin with the first point, viz. the establishment of the basis of the particular[1a] * attributes and the explanation of their special particular properties.

The first attribute is Power (*qudrah*).[1] We assert that the Creator[2a] of the world is Powerful because the world is a masterly work, well ordered, perfectly arranged, including varieties of wonders and signs, and all that points to power.

Properly to order the syllogism,[2] we say:

Any masterly work proceeds from a powerful agent. The world is a masterly work. Therefore, it proceeds from a powerful agent. Concerning which of the two premises is the dispute?

*If it be asked:*

Why did you say that the world is a masterly work?

*We answer:*

We mean by being "masterly," its perfect order, systematic arrangement, and symmetry. He who examines closely the members of his own body, external

*For numbers with a letter, please see the Appendix at the end of the translation. Footnotes are given at the end of each chapter.

and internal,[3a] will perceive wonders of perfection which surpass accounting. This is a premise the source of the knowledge of which are the senses[4a] and observation; and, thus, it cannot be denied.

*If it is said:*

Then, how did you know the other premise, viz. that every masterly and well-ordered work proceeds from a powerful agent?

*We say:*

This is attained through rational[5a] necessity. The intellect confirms this without an apodictic proof, and the intelligent person will be unable to deny it. Even though this is the case, we shall furnish a proof that will cut the ground from under denial and obstinacy.

*We say:*

We mean by His being powerful that the act proceeding from Him either proceeds from Him through His essence or through a concept[6a] superadded to His essence, and it is absurd that it proceeds from Him through His essence, because if this were the case the act would be eternal *a parte ante* (*qadīm*) along with the essence (*dhāt*).[3] This proves that it proceeds from something superadded to His essence (*dhāt*). We call this superadded attribute, through which the act exists,[7a] power, since the proper meaning of the term "power" (*qudrah*) in [the Arabic] language is nothing other than the attribute by which the act is made possible for the agent, and through which the act occurs. This description is proven by the decisive distinction which we have mentioned, and by power we mean nothing other than this attribute which we have established.

*If it is said:*

But this [argument], regarding power, could be





turned against you, for, since power is eternal (*qadīmah*), why[8a] do you say that its object is not eternal (*qadīm*) also?[4]

*We say:*

The answer to this will follow when we deal with the properties of will (*irādah*). Since we are dealing here with power, let us state its properties.

One of these properties is that it is related to all the objects of power (*maqdūrāt*) by which I mean all the possible things. Now it is evident that the possible things are infinite, and, therefore, that there is no end to the objects of power. By saying that the possible things are infinite, we mean that the creation of contingent things never comes to a point beyond which it would be impossible, in reason, for contingent things to occur. Possibility endures for ever, and the power is wide enough to include all that. The proof of this assertion, that is, the generality of the relation of power [to its objects] is that it has already been proven that the creator of the world is one. Either He has a particular power *vis-a-vis* each object of power, the latter being infinite, thus establishing an infinite progression of such powers—and this is absurd because of what has been said earlier about the absurdity of infinite progression[9a]—or the power should be one so that, despite its oneness, it becomes related to all the substances and accidents in their multiplicity, because of something common to them all. But there is no common element other than possibility (*imkān*). Therefore, it necessarily follows that every possible thing is undoubtedly an object of power, and occurs through power.

Speaking generally, if the substances and accidents

proceed from Him, it is impossible that their like do not[10a] issue from Him also, because the power to do something is power to do its like since[11a] there is nothing to prevent multiplicity in the objects of power. Therefore, its relation to all movements and all colours [i.e. change] is in one mode.

Thus, [power] lends itself to the creation of movement after movement, perpetually, and likewise of colour after colour and substance after substance (*jawhar*), etc. This is what we meant by saying that His power is related to every possible thing. Possibility is not confined to one particular number exclusive of others. So it is not possible to point to a movement of which it may be said that it is beyond the possibility of being related to a power that is also related to its like. By necessity we know that what is necessary for something is necessary for its like, and from this axiom three[12a] points arise.

*The first point. If someone asks:* Do you say[13a] that the contrary to what is known could be an object of power?

*We say:*

This matter is controversial, but it would not be so if the true nature of the problem were ascertained and the linguistic complexity[14a] removed. The explanation is that it has been established that every possible thing is an object of power and that an impossible thing is not. Let us, therefore, examine closely whether the contrary of what is known is possible (*mumkin*) or impossible (*muḥāl*)! We shall not know this until we know the meanings of impossible (*muḥāl*) and possible (*mumkin*) and verify both of them. Otherwise, careless investigation may judge the contrary of what





is known at the same time to be impossible (*muḥāl*), and possible (*mumkin*), and to be not impossible. Since it is judged to be impossible (*muḥāl*), and not impossible—and two contradictory things cannot be judged to be true at the same time—know that there is equivocation in the terms. This will be shown you by what I say, namely, that the world, for example, may truly be judged to be necessary (*wājib*), impossible (*muḥāl*), and possible (*mumkin*).

As for its being necessary (*wājib*),[5] it is called such from the following perspective: if the will of the Eternal *a parte ante* (*qadīm*) is supposed to exist[15a] as a necessary existence, the object of the will is also certainly necessary and not merely probable (*jā'iz*), since the non-existence of the object of will is absurd if at the same time the eternal will is verified to exist.

As for its being impossible (*muḥāl*),[6] it is called such if[16a] the will for its creation be supposed not to exist. Therefore, its occurrence will be impossible because it will lead to the occurrence of a contingent thing without a cause, and that is known to be impossible.

As for its being possible (*mumkin*),[7] it is so called, when it is considered by itself, excluding the question of the existence of the eternal will or its non-existence. Then it will bear the description of possibility (*imkān*). There are, therefore, three considerations:

*The first is:* The positing of the existence of the will and its relation to it [i.e. to the *mumkin*][17a] as a condition. In this respect it is necessary (*wājib*).

*The second is:* The supposition of the lack of will. From this perspective it is impossible (*muḥāl*).

*The third is:* The omission of attention to the will

and the cause, disregarding their existence or non-existence, and confining the inquiry to the world[18a] itself. From this perspective the third judgment remains to it, namely, possibility (*imkān*). We mean by this that it is possible in itself, that is, if we do not impose any condition other than itself,[19a] it would be possible (*mumkin*). It is evident from this that the one thing could be both possible and[20a] impossible; possible in itself and impossible in relation to other things, but it cannot be in itself both possible and impossible because these are contradictory. The attention should, therefore, be paid to what is contrary to the known.

For example, we may say that if it is present in God's knowledge that He will cause Zayd to die on Saturday morning, one may ask whether the creation of life for Zayd on the morning of Saturday is possible or impossible. The truth is that it is both: possible in itself, but impossible in consideration of the divine knowledge. The impossible in itself would be that which is unattainable in itself like the bringing together of the colours black and white, and not something which would be impossible because it involved impossibility in someting else.

In the case of Zayd's life, his living is not unattainable because of life itself, but because it is related to an impossibility in something other than [life] itself, namely, that very knowledge (*'ilm*), since[21a] otherwise the knowledge would be transformed into ignorance, and it is absurd that it be so transformed.

It is evident, therefore, that it is possible (*mumkin*) in itself and impossible (*muḥāl*) because it is related to an impossibility in something other than





itself. If we say that Zayd's life is an object of power at this moment, we mean only that life as such is not impossible (*muḥāl*) like the bringing together of the colours black and white. And God's power *per se* does not lack relation to the creation of life nor does it fall short of creation because of langour, weakness, or any reason having to do with power *per se*. These are two points which cannot be denied. I mean the negation of powerlessness in power *per se* and the affirmation of the possibility of life *per se*, without regard to anything else. If the opponent says that it is not an object of power in the sense that its existence leads to an impossibility, he is right in this sense, and we do not deny that.[22a]

There remains to examine the term [power]. The question is whether it is right, in language, to use this term or not. It is evident that the right thing is to use the term. People say that so and so is capable of movement and rest; if he wills, he moves, and if he does not so will, he rests. They also say that he has the power at every moment to do both these contrary things, though they know that only one of them exists in God's knowledge.[23a] This use of the term bears witness to what we have said. Its meaning follows necessarily and cannot be disputed.

*The second point. If someone says:* You have claimed that power is generally related to all things possible, what do you have to say about the objects of the power of animals and all the creatures? Do these fall within the power of God or not? If you say they do not, then you contradict your premise that the relation of power is all encompassing. And if you maintain that they fall within God's power, you shall

have either to acknowledge a single object of power acted upon by[24a] two powerful agents, which is absurd, or deny that man and all the animals are powerful, which would be an obstinate rejection of necessity and a negation to the demands of the *Divine Law*, because it is impossible to demand what cannot be done. It is absurd that God would say to His creature: You must do what is within My power and over which I have the sole power and you have no power over it.[25a] God can never demand from man what God knows man is not capable of doing.

In solving this problem, *we say* that people have taken different positions on the issue. The Jabrites[8] denied the power of man and were thus forced to deny the necessary differences between the tremor and the voluntary movement, and consequently had to say that the *Divine Law* made unfulfillable demands.

The Mu'tazilahs deny the relation of the divine power to the acts of man, of animals, of angels, of *Jinn*, and of the devils.[9] The Mu'tazilahs, however, claim that all that which issues from man is from the creation and origination of man and that God has no power to deny or to affirm. Therefore, the Mu'tazilahs necessarily must affirm two abominable enormities. The first is the denial of what the pious forefathers, may God be well pleased with them, had agreed upon, viz. there is no creator but God and no originator other than Him. The second is their attribution of origination and creation to the power of the one who does not know what he has created. For the movements which issue from man and the rest of the animals, were man to be asked about their number and their particularities and their measures, he would not





have a notion about them. For the child crawls from the cradle[26a] to suck the breast (of his mother) voluntarily, and the kitten, immediately after birth, crawls to the breast of its mother though its eyes are still closed. The spiders weave houses in strange forms that baffle geometricians[27a] by their circular, parallel lines and symmetry of arrangement. We know that spiders have no access to that which geometricians do not know.

Bees, too, form their honeycombs in hexagons without any square or circular or hectagonal or any other form.[28a] This is because the hexagon has a characteristic which geometrical proof shows not to exist in any other form. The [honeycombs] are constructed according to certain principles, one of them being that the most inclusive[29a] and most spacious form is the circular which is free from angles made of straight lines. The second [principle] is that if the circular forms were to be placed in contiguity, apertures unquestionably would be formed. The third principle is that the design closest to the circular in its inclusiveness is the form with fewest sides, and that is the hexagon.[30a] The fourth [principle] is that if all those designs which are close to the circular [in shape], like the hectagon, octagon, and the pentagon, were to be placed in contiguity and side by side, unemployed apertures would be formed and they would become uninclusive. The squares can be contiguous[31a] but because of the distance between their angles and their centres, they are far from being inclusive in the way circles are. Since the bees need a form close to the circle to encompass their bodies which are almost round; and since the space they have is limited, and

because of their great numbers, they are loathe to waste space by creating spaces between their houses[32a] which they cannot use. Since there are no forms that are closer to the circular and possessing these characteristics of contiguity and lack of gaps except the hexagon, God has made it practicable to them to select the hexagon for the building of their houses. Would that I knew, do the bees comprehend these subtleties which most sober men are unable to conceive, or is it the sole possessor of omnipotence who obliges them to attain what they most need? They are in the middle of a course because of the determination of God upon it and in it, and they neither know it, nor could they disobey it.

There are in the works of animals of this sort wonders which, if some of them were to be mentioned, hearts would be awed by the majesty and glory of God, Most High. May misery befall deviators from the right path of God, those who are deluded by their limited power and weak capacities,[33a] who think that they share with God in the creation, origination, and the bringing into being of the like of these marvels and signs. How far and remote the inferior creatures are from (sharing with God in creation and origination). The Mighty One of the heavens alone possesses omnipotence. These are the sort of enormities that necessarily follow from the doctrine of the Mu'tazilah. Observe, now, the people of the *Sunnah*, and how they were guided to what is right and reared[34a] to the golden mean in belief. They maintain that the doctrine of predestination (*jabr*) is absurd and vain and that the doctrine of the origination of his own acts by the creature (*ikhtirā'a*) is a frightful invasion [of God's





sovereignty]. Right, [they say], lies in the affirmation of two powers bearing upon one act.[10] The truth lies only in the affirmation of two powers operating upon the same act and in the doctrine of a single power related to two agents. The only thing left to deal with is the difficulty of conceiving the coincidence of two powers on one act, and this is difficult only if the relation of the two powers is the same; but if the two powers differ and so does the pattern of their relation, then the coincidence of these two relations to a single object is not absured as we shall make clear.

*If it is said:*

What makes you affirm one object of power common to two agents?

*We say:*

The decisive proof rests upon the fact that a voluntary movement differs from a tremor or an involuntary movement, even if the tremor be supposed to be the will of the one who trembles and to be intended by him. The difference, therefore, is in power. Furthermore, the decisive proof is that God's power is related to every possible thing. Every contingent thing is possible; and since man's action is a contingent thing, therefore, it is possible. If God's power is not related to it, then it is impossible. We maintain that in so far as a voluntary movement is a contingent possible movement similar to the tremor, it is impossible that God's power be related to one of them and fall short of the other which is similar to it. Nay, another absurdity would be required of him, viz. if God were to cause man's hand to rest when man wants to move it, there would exist either both motion and rest or neither, which would lead to the union of motion and

rest or[35a] to the absence of both. But the absence [of both motion and rest], though contradictory, would necessitate the negation of the two powers since power is what produces the object of power when will is realised and the locus is receptive. But if it is thought that the object of God's power carries greater weight because His power is stronger, this would be absurd because the relation of power to one movement is by no means preferred to the relation of another power to it, since the result of the two powers is origination [of the act]. His power consists in His potency over others. His potency over others has no ascendancy in this [particular] movement with which we are dealing since the destiny of the movement in relation to each one of the two powers is that it should be originated by it; and the act of origination is equal [in each case] so that there is no question of stronger or weaker in it so there may be a question of preponderance in it. Therefore, the decisive proof affirming two powers leads[36a] us to the affirmation of a single object of power having two agents.

*If it is said:*

The proof should not lead to an absurdity which cannot be understood, and that which you have mentioned is unintelligible.

*We say:*

It is our duty to make it understandable [and clear]. The clarification is that God's creation of motion in a man's hand is intelligible without this motion being the object of power of man. Therefore, since He creates motion along with a power over it, then He has the monopoly over the origination of both the power and its object. The conclusion is that





He is unique in origination, that motion is existent, and that the mover [i.e. man] is capable of it; and because he is capable, his case differs from that of the one who trembles involuntarily. All the dubious points are, therefore, done away with. The result of [this argument] is that the Powerful, who enjoys unlimited power, is capable of originating both the power and its object. Whereas the names, Creator and Originator, are given to Him who produces[37a] a thing by His power, and since both power and its object[38a] are products of God's power, He is called Creator and Originator. The object of power is not a product of man's power even though it is associated with it; and that is why he is called neither Creator nor Originator. It becomes necessary, therefore, that this type of relationship[39a] requires a different name. The term "*kasb*"[11] has been applied to the acts of men as has been indicated in the Book of God. As for the term "act" (*fi'l*), there was hesitancy in its application. In any case there should be no dispute over names if the concepts are understood.

*If it is said:*

The aim is the understanding of the concept, and what you have mentioned is not understandable because it is difficult to understand how the power created in man[40a] has no relation to the object of power, since power without an object is an absurdity like knowledge without an object. And if power is related to the object, then the relation of power to its object is inconceivable except in terms of effect (*tā'thīr*), bringing into being and the occurrence of the object of power through power. The relation between power and its object is the relation between the effect

and the cause, viz. the coming of the object of power into being through power. If the object of power does not occur through power there would be no relation between them[41a] and power would not be power because anything that has no relation is not power, for the reason that power is one of those object-taking attributes.

*We say.*

Power is relative. Your saying that the relation is limited to the occurrence [of the act] through it is invalidated by the [analogy of] the relativity of will and knowledge. It is also false[12] to say that the relation of power is limited only to the occurrence [of the object of power] through it since power, according to you, endures.[42a] And even if power is supposed to exist before the act, [the question will be] is it relative or not? If your answer is negative, this would be absurd; and if you say, "yes," then what is meant is not the occurrence of the object through it, because the object has not yet occurred. Therefore, it becomes necessary to establish another kind of relation other than the occurrence [of the object] through power, because the relation at the time of occurrence is expressed by the occurrence through it and the relation before that is contrary to this and is altogether a different kind of relation. Your saying that the relation of power has only one pattern is erroneous. Likewise, you err regarding the eternal capability (*al-qādiriyat-ul-qadīmah*) because it is related to the world[43a] in eternity and before the creation of the world. Our saying that it [i.e. power] is relative is true, but our saying that the world occurs through it is fallacious because [the world] has not yet occurred. If these





were two expressions of one point, then one would be true whenever the other is true.

*If it is said:*

The meaning of the relativity of power, before the occurrence of the object, is that when the object of power occurs, it occurs through power.

*We say:*

This [kind of relation] is not immediate, but rather it is an expectation of relation. It would be suitable to say that the power is existent while being an attribute which has no relation, but a relation is expected for it when the object of power occurs through it. Likewise with respect to the divine power.[44a] This position requires an absurdity, namely, that an attribute which was not one of the object-taking attributes has become so and it is absurd. If it is argued that the meaning of this is that it is disposed to the occurrence of power through it, we would say that there is no meaning to predisposition except the expectation of the "occurrence through it" which does not necessitate an immediate relation. As you would conceive of the existence of a power that is related to the object of power, though the object does not occur through it, by the same token we might conceive of a power like that and the object does not occur through it but rather through the power of God, Most High. So our opinion here does not contradict yours, except in our doctrine that the object does occur through God's power. But if neither the existence of the power, nor its relation to the object of power, necessitates the existence of the object of power, then how can its non-occurrence[45a] through God's power be claimed when its existence through God's power has no priority over

non-existence with respect to the severance of the relationship from the contingent power; because, if the relationship is not negated by the non-existence of the object of power,[46a] how then could [that relationship] be negated by the existence of the object of power? Whether the object of power be conceived as existing or non-existing, the supposition of an object-taking power having no presently existing object is unavoidable.

*If it is said:*

A power that does not give occurrence to an object of power is on the level of weakness.

*We say:*

If you mean by this statement that the "psychological" state which man attains at the time of its [i.e. power's] existence, is like the weakness he experiences at the time of a tremor, then this statement is an obstinate rejection of that which is immediately evident. If you place it [i.e. power] on the same level as weakness because the object of power does not occur through it, this is true; but calling it weakness is wrong, if the reference is to God's power.[13] It would be equally absurd, if they, according to their premise, were to say that power before the act is tantamount to weakness because the object does not occur through it, for the reason that [power] is a perceived psychological state, the perception of which differs, in the mind, from the perception of weakness. This is similar to the former case—there is no difference.

Speaking generally, we must admit two powers, one of which is higher and another which is similar to weakness whenever it is related to the higher. You have the option between ascribing a power to man





which suggests weakness and ascribing the same thing to God. You should have no doubt, however, if you are fair, that creatures are more deserving of limitations and weakness. This is all that this brief summary can permit concerning this question.

*The third point. If someone says:* How do you claim that the relation of power is common to all created things when most of the movements[47a] and other things in the world are generated, one of them generating the other by necessity?[14] For example, the movement of the hand generates, by necessity, the movement of the ring, and the movement of the hand in water generates the movement of the water. These occurrences are observed and reason also bears them out. If the movements of the hand and ring are created by God, it would be conceivable that He may create the movement of the hand without the movement of the water, and that is absurd. The absurdity of this position holds true of all generated things with all of their ramifications.

*We say:*

What is not understood can neither be rejected nor accepted because a doctrine is accepted or rejected after it becomes intelligible. What is known to us by the term "generation" (*tawallud*) is the coming of one body out of the inside of another body in the way a foetus comes out of the mother s womb and a plant from the earth. But (a similar process) is impossible in the case of accidents because the movement of the hand has neither an "inside" (*jawf*) so that the movement of the ring may come out of it; nor is it something that contains things so that some of what it contains may percolate out of it. What is

the meaning of the generation of the ring's movement from that of the hand if it [i.e. movement of the ring] is not latent in it [i.e. in the movement of the hand] *per se*? This [process of generation] has to be made clear; and if [the process] is not understood, then your claim that [the process of generation] is observed is ignorance and silliness because its occurrence [i.e. of the movement of the water or the ring] with it [i.e. with the movement of the hand] is observed with it and nothing else.[48a] That the one is generated from the other, is not perceived. Your claim that if [the movement] is created by God,[49a] then He would have been able to create the movement of the hand without that of the ring, and that of the hand without that of the water, is sheer nonsense comparable to the claim of those who say that if the will is not generated from knowledge,[50a] then He would have been able to create the will without knowledge or knowledge without life. But we say that the impossible (*muḥāl*) is not an object of God's power, that the presence of the conditioned without the condition is impossible, and that the condition for will is knowledge and the condition for knowledge is life; and likewise, the condition for occupation of a place by matter is the vacuity of that place. If God should move a [man's] hand, then He would surely cause it to occupy a position adjacent to the one which it was occupying. If He does not evacuate [the place], how could He occupy it with [the hand]? The vacuity of the place is a condition for its occupation by the hand. If [the hand] moves and the place is not emptied of water by the non-existence of the water or its movement [i.e. displacement of the water],





then two bodies would meet in one place which is impossible. The vacuity[51a] of one place is, therefore, a condition for the other which is the reason why they are mutually conditioned and that makes it appear as if one is generated from the other, which is a mistake. As for consequences (*lāzimāt*) which are not conditions, we think it admissible that they be separate[52a] from the logical conclusion[15] necessary for the consequence. Rather their concomitancy is determined by virtue of following custom, like the burning of cotton when it touches fire and the occurrence of coldness in the hand when it touches ice. All this continues to happen by the ordinance of God; otherwise, power in itself does not fall short of creating coldness in ice and the touching of it by the hand along with the creation of heat in the hand instead of coldness when it [the hand] touches the ice.[53a] Therefore, what the opponent sees as "generated" falls into two categories. One of them is a condition which could not be conceived as separate from the locical conclusion[54a] and the second is not a condition, and hence its separation from the logical conclusion[55a] could be conceived if the usual order of events is violated.

*If it is said:*

You did not prove the negation of generation but only denied that it is understood. It is, however, understood because we mean by it neither the bringing forth of a movement from another by its [i.e. movement's] coming out of [a movement's] inside, nor the generation of coldness from ice by the coming forth or coldness out of ice, and its transference, or its coming forth out of the coldness itself. Rather, we mean

by it the existence of an existent as a consequence to an existent and its being existent and originated by it [i e. by the existent]. Therefore, we call the originated thing generated, and that by which generation occurs, is called generator [i.e. that which generates]. This naming is understandable; what, then, points to its negation?

*We say:*

If you accept[56a] that [i.e. the above argument], then what indicates the falsity [of your position] is the same as has indicated the absurdity of the contingent power's being a creator. Therefore, if we think it impossible to maintain that an object of power is originated by a contingent power, why should we not consider as impossible the occurrence [of an act] by that which is not power?[57a] Therefore, its impossibility [i.e. of generation] is due to the relativity of power being common; and its exclusion [i.e. exclusion of generation] from the sphere of power negates this common aspect of its [i.e. power's] relativity. But this position is absurd and, furthermore, necessitates impotence and mutual hindrance[58a] as has been stated before.

Yes, the Mu'tazilah who hold [the doctrine] of generation (*tawallud*) have fallen into innumerable contradictions in their exposition of generation; such as their claim that inquiry generates knowledge, while its recollection [i e. recollection of knowledge] does not generate it [i.e. knowledge],[59a] etc. There is no need for verbosity in what is not necessary. You have understood from the summation of this [i.e. the above discussion] that all contingent things, their substances and accidents, which occur in the essences of living





beings and inanimates, occur through God's power and that He is unique in their creation, and not one of the created things occurs through another [i.e. none by contingent power or *tawallud*] but rather all occur through God's power. What we have wanted to clarify is the affirmation of the attribute of power in God, its [i.e. power's] general properties, and the aspects and consequences associated with it.

## Notes

1. Ghazālī in this chapter formulates a concept of divine power which is essencially atomistic. This view is based on the basic Ash'arite principle which is God's absolute power, a power which cannot be limited by any consideration. The principle which underscores this concept of God's power is that it is related to every possible thing. Only the impossible cannot be an object of power (translation, pp. 4-5). This is so because the question whether God Who composed the parts of a body is powerful enough to separate them until they are reduced to the atom or not must be asked. If the answer is negative, this would be ascribing to God powerlessness (*ta'jiz*). But if the answer is affirmative, then the opponent would admit the concept of the indivisible atom (translation, p. 8). Ghazālī denies that there can be infinite division *in actu* and hence infinite regress. It seems by this denial Ghazālī is trying to refute Naẓẓām's claim that a body is divisible *ad infinitum* (*Intiṣār*, pp. 32-3). But Naẓẓām is not speaking there about a division *in actu*; rather he talks about an intellectual division (ibid., p. 33).

Ghazālī restates once more here his and the Ash'arites' doctrine of causality, a doctrine which denies all natural laws and man's freedom in acts. All natural phenomena are here dismissed as occurring through mere custon (*ṭard al-'ādah*), (translation, p. 19). Ghazālī says that every contingent thing and every act or movement is divisible into separate parts and that power creates movement after movement, and substance after substance perpetually (translation, p. 4). This, Ghazālī says, is true of bodies and not accidents, for accidents do not endure for two moments of time. He goes on to prove this through the example of the ring on the hand when man moves the hand. Here Ghazāli says, there is no causal nexus between the movement of the hand and that of the ring. He concludes by saying that man does not influence these movements, but he certainly can relate to himself an act which God has created. This power of man is what

he called *kasb* (translation, pp. 13, 16-7).

Al-Ash'arī in the *Maqālāt* (pp. 377-8), sums up for us the various Mu'tazilah positions concerning the concept of man's power as follows:

Some say:

The Maker of the world is able to make His creatures "create" substances, colours, flavours, and all other kinds of acts. This is the claim of the extremists among the Rāfiḍīs.

Others say:

God cannot be described as enabling His creatures to "do" substances, but He is powerful to make them "do" all accidents such as life, death, knowledge, and the power to do all other kinds of accidents.

This is the position of al-Ṣāliḥī.

Some say:

The Maker of the world is powerful to enable His creatures to [do] colours, flavours, coldness, moisture, and dryness. He is more powerful than they in so doing. As for power on life and death, it is not permissibls that He enables them to do any of these.

This is the claim of Bishr ibn al-Mu'tamar.

Others say:

There is no accident which is not permissible for God to empower [His creatures] to do its like. The only accident, according to this group, is the movement. As for colours, flavours, coldness, and sound, they have denied that God could empower His creatures to do them because, to them, these are substances, and God can only empower His creatures to [do] movements.

This is the statement of an-Naẓẓām.

Some say:

It is possible that God may empower His creatures to do movements and rest, sound, and pain and all that which they know its "howness" (*kayfiyyah*). As for accidents whose "howness" they do not know such as colours, flavours, life, death, powerlessness, and dower, it is not permissible to describe God as able to empower [His creatures] to do any of them.

This is the position of Abū-l-Hudhayl.

2. See Chapter I. "*Al-Iqtiṣād Fil-I'tiqād, Method and Importance,*" pp 1-2.

3. To the Mu'tazilah the problem was whether attributes, conceived as real incorporeal beings distinct from God's essence, existed in God or not. Their interpretation of attributes affirmed of God as operative or Negative attributes was used by them as a means of saying that none of the terms predicated of God in the Qur'ān or in the common speech of men are to be taken to signify the existence of real attributes in God. Ghazālī takes issue with them, for, logically with the denial of real attributes, all the terms affirmed of God become predicates which are identical with the subject. Such a tautological approach is not acceptable to Ghazālī because this would be tantamount to saying God is God. See Wolfson: (*a*) "Avicenna, Alghazali, and Averroes," *Homenaje a Millas-Vallicrosa*, Barcelona, 1956, Vol. II, pp. 545-71: (*b*) "Philosophical Implications of the Problem of Divine Attributes in the Kalām," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 79, pp. 73-80; (*c*) "Maimonides on Negative Attributes," *Louis Ginsberg Jubilee Volumes*, pp. 411-46.





4. Ghazālī's contention is that an act could never be eternal. If it were eternal, it would cease to be an act, for an act is something which is started after it was not.

5. Ibn Sīnā in *Ishārāt* (pp. 447-9-1) defines the necessary (*wājib*) as that which by its essence is necessary if we do not take into consideration anything other than its very essence. If it is necessary by itself, then this would be the "truth". But also if the condition for the existence of the necessary is supposed to exist, then the necessary must exist.

6. The impossible (*muḥāl*) or, as Ibn Sīnā calls it, the *mumtani'* is that which either by its essence is impossible or because its cause is nonexistent (ibid., pp 447-9-1).

7. The possible (*mumkin*) is that which cannot exist by itself, for its existence has no priority over its non-existence. Its existence or nonexistence is only due to the existence of something or its non-existence. By "something" Ibn Sīnā means the cause. Ṭūsī, commenting on this says that Ibn Sīnā means that the possible can only exist if it has a cause different from it. The stress here is that there should be a determining factor (*murajjiḥ*) (ibid., pp. 448-10-1).

8. The Jabrites, headed by Jahm ibn Ṣafwān, maintain that man's act is not his own, that God alone is the creator of all acts. In this respect, they claim there is no difference between an involuntary act such as the tremor of the hand or the act of falling from a high place, on the one hand, or such acts which man imagines are his own acts such as walking, speaking or motion. Man is completely compelled (*majbūr*) because he is devoid of any power or will. He is like a leaf in stormy weather. God alone creates for him his acts and runs them through him The Jabrites, therefore, attribute power to man in a metaphorical sense. No man has power in reality (*ḥaqīqah*) (*Maqālāt*, p. 279; Māturīdī, *Sharḥ al-Fiqh al-Akbar*, pp 9-10).

9. Some Mu'tazilah deny that God has a power over the acts of men or animals. They attribute such acts to man's free will (*ikhtiyār*). We have discussed this in various parts above (*Intiṣār*, pp. 53-4; *Maqālāt*, pp. 377-8, 563, 566).

10. The Ash'arites tried to steer a middle course between the Jabrites who deny man any power and the Mu'tazilah who attribute to man a power over his acts. The Ash'arites thus affirmed two kinds of acts: (*a*) involuntary acts in the face of which man is completely powerless, which shows that they are definitely created for him and over which he exercises no will, and (*b*) voluntary acts over which man has power preceded by will. Such power is what makes man acquire (*yaktasib*) his acts. *Kasb* or acquisition is this association between man's power and the act of God which means that if man wills an act, God would at that very moment create for him a power to do it and thus man acquires the power (*Maqālāt*, p. 542).

11. This term *kasb* which we have discussed in n. 10 above is derived from the Qur'ān where it appears in many places to mean what man acquires of sins and good deeds. According to S. Pines (*Madhhab al-dharrah*, p. 31), al-Ash'arī formulated it from its generic form as expounded

by Ḍirār and al-Najjār (*Maqālāt*, pp. 383, 408, 566). Al-Ash'arī's own difinition is as follows: "The truth as I believe is that the meaning of *al-iktisāb* is that a thing occurs through a contingent power and thus it becomes acquisition (*kasb*) to him through whose power it occurs" (ibid., p. 542).

12. This is a reference to those philosophers who take an anti-atomist position and maintain that power endures. For Ghazālī it lasts one moment. This is in accordance with his doctrine of continuous creation.

13. Ghazālī is for treating the attributes as positive attributes of action, but the possibility of his treatment of these attributes as negation may be expounded, although such statement could not serve as a groundwork for a negative aspect. We feel, however, its documentation is within the realm of possibility, hard as it may prove.

14. The Mu'tazilah differed on the concept, generation (*tawallud*). Some of them maintained that it is the act which occurs *through me* and alights in *other than me*. Others said, it is the act which *I determine its cause* and thus it becomes beyond my ability to abstain from it. I may do it *within myself* or in *other than myself*. Some said: it is the third act which succeeds my will such as pain which succeeds a blow or motion (*dhihāb*) which succeeds a push (*daf'ah*). Al-Iskāfī said: any act which occurs through a mistake or without being intended or willed is generated (*mutawallid*), while any act which occurs only through intention and every part of it requires renewed intention (*qaṣd*), falls outside the boundary of generation, and is to be included within the boundary of the direct act (*mubāshir*) (*Maqālāt*, pp. 408 ff.). Consider also Ma'mar's views that all generated things are the acts of bodies naturally (ibid., pp. 564 ff., 405).

15. See note 11, above.



*Chapter II*

# THE SECOND ATTRIBUTE: KNOWLEDGE ('ILM)[1]

We assert that God knows all existent and non-existent objects of knowledge. Existing things are divided into eternal and contingent things. The eternal things are His essence and His attributes. Whoever knows[60a] other than himself knows best his own essence and attributes It follows, by necessary, that He knows His own essence and attributes if it be affirmed that He knows other than Himself. It is known that He knows other than Himself because that to which the name "other" is applied is His masterly creation and perfectly organised acts which point to the knowledge of the Maker just as they point to His power, as we have seen earlier. Whoever sees arranged lines issuing in harmonious form from a scribe, and then doubts his [i.e. scribe's] knowing the craft of writing would be silly in his doubt. Therefore, it has been established that He knows His essence and others than Himself.

*If it is asked:*

Do His objects of knowledge have a limit?

*We answer:*

No, even if things existing at the present are limited, the possible things in the future are infinite. He knows[61a] the possibles which are non-existent, and whether He shall actually create them or not and these are infinite.[62a] He, therefore, knows what is infinite. Nay, if we are to multiply a thing in various

ratios and measurements, this would be infinite, but God knows them all. We say that, for example, the double of two is four, and the double of four is eight, and the double of eight is sixteen; and in the same manner if we multiply the multiple of two and the multiple of the multiple *ad infinitum*, a man would know of their [i.e. these mathematical calculations] degrees only what his mind is capable of knowing and his life will end while the infinity of the multiplications continues. Since the knowledge of the multiples of the multiples of two (and it is but a simple number) are unaccountable—and it is the same with every number like it—then what of the other ratios and quantities? This knowledge, and its relation to infinite objects of knowledge, is but one as will be clarified later along with the rest of the attributes.[2]

## Notes

1. The Mu'tazilah did not deny the attribute of knowledge but made equal to the essence. Al-'Allāf said that God is knowing through a knowledge which is His essence. Affirming knowledge to God meant negating its contrary which in effect is that knowledge is attribute of negation, i.e. it negates ignorance to God. An-Naẓẓām, however, declared that it is an attribute of negation and that all existent things are known to God, i.e. are unveiled to God's knowledge, and it is not an attribute superadded to the essence. He also added that it is an eternal attribute which does not change, for, if it changes, God would be a locus for contingent things and what is not free from contingent things is also a contingent thing. To the objection that since objects of knowledge are subject to mutation and change as can be perceived by the senses, why does not knowledge change also? They answer that change is true of the knowledge of Man because it is a knowledge which is acquired by the senses and the senses only sense what is changeable. But God knows a thing before it occurs and after it *is*, and knows when it is annihilated. Change in time leads to change in man's knowledge but the concept of time cannot be applied to the divine knowledge because the revelation of time to God's knowledge is one. All things





are known to God eternally without their changeability effecting change, in His knowledge or making Him *ḥadith* (*Maqālāt*, pp. 158-67).

2. God knows everything, whether universal or particular, but the Mu'tazilah and later the philosophers denied that God knows the particular. For the Mu'tazilah it was thought that if God knows the particulars that would mean burdening Him with the acts of men.

This problem of God's knowledge of the particulars is a very difficult one. Sa'd ad-Dīn al-Taftāzānī in his commentary on the *'Aqā'id of Nasafi*, p. 83, presents the argument this way:

knowledge, he says, is an eternal attribute which uncovers the objects of knowledge when it is connected with them.

The commentary can be paraphrased as follows. These objects of knowledge which are uncovered are all those objects whether existent or non-existent, impossible or possible, contingent or eternal, infinite or finite, particular or universal. This is so because:

what necessitates being known is the essence of the objects of knowledge and what necessitates knowingness is God's essence,

and the relation of the essence to all objects of knowledge is equal and since His knowledge of some objects of knowledge has been established, it becomes necessary that He knows the whole. But what about the philosophers' argument that particulars are subject to change which necessitates change in the essential knowledge? Taftāzānī's answer is that God's knowledge of changeable things is of two aspects:

A knowledge which is not bound by time which is God's knowledge of every one of them bound by the time of their existence in a universal way and bound by their non-existence at the time of their non-existence. Knowledge, however, is eternal and does not change. Another knowledge is bound by time and this is God's knowledge of certain change—that things are either existent or disappearing and this is finite *in actu* according to the finiteness of changeable things and finite *in potentia* like the eternally changeable things. But the change of these neither necessitates a change in the attribute of knowledge nor something real in God's essence. Rather it necessitates a change in the relation of knowledge and its connection with its objects (p. 84).

Al-Dawwānī in *Sharḥ al-'Aqā'id al-'Aḍadiyyah* supports a similar view. For him, God knows all objects of knowledge:

all the quiddities with which it is proper for His essence to be connected and He knows others than His essence whether these are universals or particulars.

We will let Dawwānī himself argue against the philosophers who deny that God knows the particulars.

He knows His essence and other than His essence is agreed upon by all philosophers except a handful of ancient philosophers—who do not matter very much—who maintain that the world issues from Him unconsciously; and by this they want to say that the emanation of existence and its properties is a consequential property of His essence just as the light's being a consequence of the sun is a perfection (p. 109).

Al-Imām al-Rāzī in *al-Mabāḥith al-Mashriqiyyah* says that most of the ancient and later philosophers deny that God knows the particulars while al-Shaykh Abū al-Barakāt al-Baghdādī asserts it (pp. 110-1).

To discuss the position of the philosophers, al-Dawwānī says that there are four points to be considered :

(1) Things either have no form and are non-changeable;
(2) or they are changeable but do not have forms;
(3) or they have forms but do not change;
(4) or they have forms and do change (p. 111).

As for (1), God knows them whether they are universals or particulars—How could it be said that He does not know the particulars while most of these philosophers are agreed that He is knowing in virtue of His essence and knows the intelligences.

As for (3), they are like the heavenly bodies whose measures and forms are permanent and free from change. And they are, in their view, not known to God individually because the perception of bodily things is done only by a bodily instrument.

As for (2), they are like the forms and the accidents and the rational souls. They are not objects of knowledge for God, not because they require a bodily instrument but because, since they are changeable, their change necessitates change in knowledge.

As for (4), they are like the existent and corruptible bodies. They are impossible to be objects of knowledge for the two reasons that they are changeable and subject to corruption.

Later philosophers replaced "having form" by "being material" and maintained that He does not have changeable-material-particulars. They considered them as they are, i.e. inasmuch as they are material—i.e. attached to matter and its accidents and inasmuch as they are changeable and occupying units of time, in the past, the present and the future, and because the perception of material particulars since their attachment to matter makes them objects of sensing and imagination. Sensing and imagination are only done by a particularised bodily instrument and also the perception of the changeable particulars which occupy units of time, their change necessitates change in knowledge.

Al-Dawwānī takes these points posed by the philosophers as they are related by Ṭūsī and refutes them one by one.

The first argument, he contends, was not necessary because God is free from matter and its attachments and hence there is no need to deny sensing and imagination—which are properties of matter—to God. The second argument, he declares, is hardly necessary because God's rationalising is not through a faculty like our human rationalising faculty. Thirdly, al-Dawwānī argues that he does not accept the supposition that if God's knowledge is through rationalising that would not refute a supposition of *ishtirāk* because God's knowledge of His essence and of the intellects is in a particular way. Fourthly, because to contend that "being universal" and "being particular" is one of the absolute qualities of knowledge is impossible.



# *Chapter III*

## THE THIRD ATTRIBUTE: LIFE[1]

We assert that He, Most High, is living. This is known by necessity, and none of those who have acknowledged that He is Powerful and Knowing deny it. That a powerful knower is living, is necessary, because we only mean by the living what is conscious of its self,[2] knows its self and others than itself. How could the knower of all objects of knowledge and the powerful over all objects of power not be living? This is evident, and the investigation into the attribute of life should not occupy us any further.

### *Notes*

1. The attribute of life raised no controversy of significance among the Mu'tazilah or the philosophers except in the way this attribute is to be predicated of God which falls within the general problem of predication. Even Ibn Rushd devoted to it a few lines in *Manāhij al-Adillah*, pp. 161-2, where he says that the existence of the attribute of life is apparent from the attribute of knowledge because one of the conditions of knowledge is life. He further says that what the Mutakallims have said in this respect is correct.

2. That a living is what is conscious of itself is a concept that opens many possibilities except that Ghazālī chose not to elaborate on it here for it hints to the question of the ego and existence as is formulated by Ibn Sīnā in *Kitāb an-Nafs* of *al-Najāt*.

*Chapter IV*

# THE FOURTH ATTRIBUTE: WILL[1]

We assert that God wills His acts; and the proof [of this assertion] is that an act issuing from Him is characterised by sorts of possibilities which cannot be distinguished from each other except by a preponderant.[2] His essence is not sufficient for preponderance because the relation of the essence to the opposite things is the same. What is it, then, that causes one of two opposite things to occur at a specific time and not the other? Likewise, power is not enough in this case as the relation of power to two opposite things is one and the same thing. Moreover, knowledge (*'ilm*) is not sufficient—contrary to al-Ka'bī,[3] who found knowledge sufficient without will—because knowledge succeeds the object of knowledge and is related to it as it is; and [knowledge] neither affects [the object] nor changes it. If a thing is possible in itself, and is co-extensive with another possible thing which is opposite to it, then knowledge is related to it *per se*. We should not make one of the two possible things preponderant over the other: rather we should intellect[63a] two possible things and intellect their co-extensiveness.

God, Most High, knows that the existence of the world at the time of its actual existence was possible, and that its existence either after that time or before it was equally possible because these possibilities are co-extensive. Knowledge, therefore, should be related to [the world] in all these stages of possibilities. If the





attribute of will requires its [the world's] occurrence at a specific time, knowledge would be related to the determination of its [i.e. the world's] existence at that time because of the relation of will to it [i.e. to the actualisation of the world]. In this case, will[64a] would be the cause of determination, and knowledge (*'ilm*) would be both related to it and subordinate to it without affecting it. If it were permissible that knowledge is sufficient without the will, it should be sufficient without the power. Rather, that [i.e. knowledge] would be sufficient for the existence of our acts and we would not need the will since one side becomes preponderant because of the relation of God's knowledge to it and that is absurd.

*If it is said:*

This [sort of reasoning] would be turned against you concerning will itself because just as the eternal power is not related to one of two opposite things to the exclusion of the other, the eternal will is likewise not determined for one of two opposite things to the exclusion of the other, for, its specification of either of the two opposite things should be through a specifier which leads to infinite regress, since it may be said that the essence [alone] is not sufficient for causing [a thing] to come into being for the reason that if it [i.e. a thing] comes into existence from the essence, it would exist concomitantly with the essence, not later. There should be a power; but power is not enough because if a thing comes into existence not because of the existence of power, it would not have been specified by this [particular] time[55a] since the relation of time—before and after the coming of a thing into being—to the possibility of the relation of power to it

[i.e. to time] is in one mode.

What is it, then, that specifies [this particular] time? [If the answer is], it needs will [to be so specified], it would be said that will [alone] is not enough because the eternal will, like the eternal power, is general in its relation [to its objects] and its relation to all time is one just as its relation to two opposite things is also one. Motion, for instance, occurs instead of rest because will is related to motion rather than to rest.

*It may [further] be asked:*

Is it possible that [will] be related to rest?

If the answer is negative, this would be absurd. If the answer is affirmative, then motion and rest are co-extensive in their relation to the eternal will. What, then, makes it a necessity for the eternal will to preponderate motion rather than rest? It [i.e. will] would require a preponderant [in this case], and it would, therefore, be necessary to ask about the determining principle of the determining principle, *ad infinitum.*

*We say* that this is a question which has puzzled the minds of people of various schools, and none but the Sunnīs were divinely guided to the truth. Scholars are divided into four groups over it.

Some say that the world exists through the essence of God, Most High, and that it [i.e. essence] absolutely has no added attribute.[66a] Since the essence (*dhāt*) is eternal, they maintain, therefore, the world is eternal; and the relation of the world to it [i.e. to the *dhāt*] is like the relation of the effect to the cause, the light to the sun, and the shadow to a man. These are the philosophers.[4] Another group maintains that the world is contingent (*ḥādīth*) but came into existence





at the time when it came into existence, neither before that nor after it, because of a contingent will that had occurred to it, but not a locus (*maḥal*),[5] [i.e. not in God's essence], thus requiring the coming of the world into being. These are the Mu'tazilah.

Still a third group maintain that it [the world] came into existence through a contingent will in His essence. This is the group maintaining that He [i.e. God] is a locus for contingent things.[6] The fourth group assert that the world comes into existence at the time when the eternal will is connected with its occurrence [at that time] without the origination of a will, and without a change in the attribute of the Eternal.[7] Consider the various groups, and compare the position of each to the other. The path of none of these groups is free of insoluble doubt except that of the Sunnīs whose doubtful aspect is easy to resolve.

As for the philosophers, they have asserted the eternity of the world, which is absurd; because it is impossible for the act to be eternal, since the meaning of its being an act is that there was a time when it was not [existent], then it became [existent]. If it were eternally existent with God, how could it be an act? The assumption of infinite revolutions would necessarily follow from this, according to what we have stated before, and that is absurd from [many] aspects. Moreover, with their falling in this difficulty, they cannot rid themselves of the basic question, which is: Why is will connected with the coming into being of the contingent thing at a specific time rather than before or after that time, in spite of the co-extensiveness of the relations of the various units of time to the will? Even if they solve the problem of the specifica-

tion of time,[67a] they would not solve the problem of the peculiarity of the attributes, because the world is specified by a measure and a specific arrangement though the contrary of all such[18] [measures and arrangements] is rationally possible to conceive. The eternal essence is not related to some possible things to the exclusion of others. The most grievous error which this position requires of them, for which they have no excuse and from which they have absolutely no escape, consists of two points which we have mentioned in the book "The Destruction of the Philosophers" (*Tahāfut al-Falāsifah*).[8]

One of these points is that some of the revolutions of the spheres are easterly, that is from the east to the west, and the others are westerly, that is from where the sun sets to where it rises.[68a] The reversal [of these easterly and westerly revolutions] is co-extensive in possibility because directions are equal for revolutions. How, then, was it necessary for the eternal essence or for the heavenly spheres, which they consider eternal, specifically to single out a direction and not the one opposite to it which is co-extensive with it from all aspects? To this they have no answer.

The second is that the highest sphere, which is the ninth sphere, in their view is the one that moves all the heavens once during the day and night [every twenty-four hours] by compulsion, revolving on two poles, northern and southern. The poles, so to speak, are the two opposite points on the surface of the sphere which are fixed at the time of the revolution of the sphere on itself [i e. on its axis]. The equator (*al-manṭiqah*) is a huge circle around the centre of the sphere that is the same distance from the two poles.





*We say* that the mass of the highest sphere is symmetrical and similar. Any point on it [i.e. on its surface] could be considered as a pole. What made it necessary, then, that two points were singled out [to be poles] from amongst the mass of points which they assert to be infinite? There must be an attribute, different from the essence, whose function is to distinguish a thing from its like. That [different attribute] is nothing but will. We have given these two objections their due of careful examination in the book [*Tahāfut*] "Destruction of the Philosophers".

As for the Mu'tazilah, they have rushed blindly into two abominable and false subjects. The first is that the Beneficent, Most High, wills through a contingent will which is not a locus [i e. not in His essence]. If will does not subsist in Him, then the assertion of those who say that He wills through it[69a] is improper use of language, like their saying that He wills through a will subsisting in something other than Himself. The second is: Why does will occur at this specific time? If it occurs through another will, then the examination of this other will becomes necessary, and this will lead to infinite regress. If it occurs without a will, then the world should occur at this specific time without will which is absurd.[70a] But this is absurd because the need of a contingent thing to will is because of its possibility, not because of its being a body, or a heaven,[71a] an earth, or a man; and all contingent things are equal in this [need for will]. Furthermore, the [Mu'tazilah] cannot rid themselves of the problem because they would be asked why *will* (*irādah*) occurs at this specific time and why willing motion occurs rather than willing rest. Since

in their view, there occurs for every contingent thing a contingent will which is related to that contingent thing, why, then, does not the contingent will come into being related to the opposite of that contingent thing?

As for those who take the position of asserting the origination of will in His essence, they have avoided one of the two problems, viz. His being a willer through a will in something other than His essence, but they have added another problem, viz. His being a Locus for contingent things, which necessarily makes Him originated (*ḥādith*). Therefore, the rest of the problem remains for them, and they have not rid themselves of the question.

As for the People of the Truth, they have maintained that contingent things originate through an eternal will which is connected with them [i.e. with contingent things], and which distinguishes them from their opposites which are similar to them. The question of those who want to know why it [i.e. will] is related to them [i.e. with the contingent things] while their opposites are equally possible is a false question because "will" is nothing other than an attribute, the function of which is to distinguish one thing from its equal. The question of those who ask why will distinguishes one thing from another is like the question of those who want to know why knowledge (*'ilm*) makes necessary the disclosure of the objects of knowledge (*ma'lūm*). It would be said that "knowledge" is meaningless if it does not disclose the objects of knowledge. Therefore, the question of those who want to know why it (*'ilm*) renders necessary the uncovering [of the object of knowledge] is like their





asking why is "knowledge" knowledge in itself; why is the "possible" possible; and why is the "necessary" necessary? All this is absurd.[72a] "Knowledge" is knowledge in itself and so is the "possible," the "necessary," and the rest of the essence. Likewise is will, whose essence is to distinguish one thing from its like. Therefore, the statement of those who want to know why it [will] distinguishes a particular thing from its like is like their saying why is the "will" will and the "power" power. That is absurd. Each [of the four groups] is obliged to confirm the existence of an attribute, the function of which is to distinguish one thing from another equally possible thing. This [attribute] is nothing other than will. Therefore, the best of the [four] sects in doctrine and the most rightly guided are those who affirm this attribute [i.e. will] and who also do not think of it as a contingent [will] but maintain that it is eternal [and] connected with contingent things at a specific time. Therefore, the occurrence [of contingent things] at that time is because of this [i.e. because of the relation of the eternal will to the contingent things at a specific time]. No sect can do without this [thesis], and by it the necessity to continue discussing this question is removed.

Now that our thesis concerning the principle of will has been put in order, know that according to us [will] is related to all contingent things inasmuch as it has been clarified that every contingent thing is created through [God's] power and that everything created through power needs will to dispose power to the object of power and to particularise it [i e the object] with it. Since every object of power is willed,

and since every contingent thing is an object of power, therefore, every contingent thing is willed [i.e. is an object of will]. Evil, infidelity, and sins are contingent things and, therefore, are objects of will. What God wishes is, and what He does not wish is not. This is the doctrine of the venerable fathers and the creed of all the Sunnīs, and its proofs have been furnished.

As for the Mu'tazilah, they say that all sins and all evil originate without God's will; nay, He hates them [i.e. He hates evil and sins].[9] But it is known that most of what happens in the world is sin. Therefore, what He hates is more numerous than what He wills. According to their [i.e. Mu'tazilah's] assertion, He is nearer to impotence and inability. God is loftier than the claims of the unjust.

*If it is asked:*

How does He command what He does not will, and how does He will something and then forbid [practising] it; and how does He will immoral acts, sins, transgression and what is ugly when the willer of what is ugly (*qabīḥ*) is foolish?

*We say:*

If we examine the reality of "command" and demonstrate clearly that it is different from "will," and examine the [nature] of the ugly and the good, and clearly demonstrate that they are due to their agreement with human predilections, or to their disagreement with [human predilections]—God is far above predilections—these problems will be overcome.[21] This will be dealt with in its proper place if God so wishes.





## Notes

1. We have discussed the attribute of will at length in our Introduction. Here we may and that Ibn Rushd rejects completely Ghazālī's contention that will is eternal and dismisses the notion that that in which contingent things subsist must be contingent cannot be substantiated or defended scientifically (*Manāhij al-Adi'lah*, p. 162).

2. The concept of *murajjiḥ* is Ghazālī's most sustained argument which proves the existence of an eternal will.

3. Abul-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad al-Ka'bī was a student of al-Khayyāṭ. He maintained that:
God's will is not an attribute subsisting in His essence, that He is neither willing in virtue of Himself nor is His will generated in a locus or no locus. When He is called willing, it means that He is knowing, powerful and is neither forced to do an act nor is He hateful of it. If it is said that He wills His acts, this means that He creates them according to His knowledge (*Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, p. 53).

4. The reference is to Ibn Sīnā and al-Fārābī who maintained that the world is eternal.

5. This is the school of Abul-Hudhayl al-'Allāf, the head of the Mu'tazilah. He is said to be the first Mu'tazilī to speak of a will not in a locus (*irādah lā fī maḥal*) (*Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, pp. 34-5).

6. The Karramites are the followers of Abū 'Abdallah Muḥammad ibn Karrām Shahrastānī considers him among the attributists because he affirmed attributes to God except that his extreme position led him to rank among the Corporealists and the likeners. The Karramites allow "the subsistence of most contingent things in God's essence" They say, however, that what occurs in His essence occurs through His power, that what occurs and is different from His essence, occurs through contingent creation (*al-iḥdāth*), and by the latter they mean the "act of creation" (*al-ījād*) and the "act of annihilation" (*al-i'dām*) which occur in His essence through His power of speech and will. By generated (*muḥdath*) they mean all that which is different from His essence such as substances and accidents. This way they differentiate between "creation" and "creature" and between the "act of creation" and the existent and the creator (*mūjid*) (*Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, pp. 79-81).

7. As is consistent with the Ash'arite doctrine of the eternity of the attributes, they maintain that the eternal will does not change as would the contingent thing.

8. See *Tahāful al-Falāsifah*, I. p. 58.

9. See notes on *Will*.

*Chapter V*

# THE FIFTH AND SIXTH ATTRIBUTES: CONCERNING SEEING AND HEARING[1]

We assert that the Maker of the world is Hearing and Seeing. We substantiate this assertion by the *Divine Revelation* and by reason. As for the Divine Revelation, numerous verses from the Qur'ān vindicate our assertion. The Most High says: "He is the Hearer and the See-er." And like the saying of Abraham, peace be upon him, "Why do you worship what does not hear, see, or suffice you a thing?" We know that the statement cannot be turned against him [i.e. Abraham] with respect to his own object of worship and that he worshipped a hearer and a see-er; otherwise, he [i.e. Abraham] would have been the partner of idolaters.

*If it is said:*

By [hearing and seeing] is meant *knowledge*.

*We say:*

The terms set by the Divine Revelation should be transferred away from their [seemingly] intelligible and immediately understood meaning if it were impossible to suppose them to mean what has been set forth; but there is no impossibility in His being Hearer and See-er; nay, He should be so. It is senseless to deny arbitrarily what the people of the consensus (*ijmā'*)[2] have understood from the Qur'ān.

*If it is said:*

The aspect of the impossibility [of His being Hearer and See-er] is that if His hearing and seeing were





contingent things, He would be a locus for contingent things, and that is absurd. On the other hand, if they [i.e. hearing and seeing] were eternal, then how would He hear a voice that is non-existent, and how would He see the world in eternity, when the world is yet non-existent, for the non-existent cannot be seen?

*We say:*

This question would issue from a Mu'tazilī or a philosopher. As for the Mu'tazilī, his refutation is easy because he has admitted that the Most High knows all contingent things. Therefore, we say that God knows, now, that the world has been existent before this [moment]; how, then, does He know in pre-eternity that it was existent when it has not yet existed? If it is possible to establish an attribute in pre-eternity, which becomes [at the time of] the existence of the world a knowledge that [the world] exists before [the existence of the world] that it will be, and after [the world has come into existence]. that it existed without this attribute undergoing any change, this attribute is expressed by the term "knowledge" (*'ilm*) and the state of being knowing (*'ālimīyyah*).[73a] This you can properly apply for hearing—and the state of being hearer, seeing—and the state of being see-er.

If [the question] issues from a philosopher who denies that God knows the particular[74a] contingent things which fall within time, past, present, or future,[3] then our course [in answering the philosopher] would be to bring the discussion of "knowledge" (*'ilm*) and to establish [against his argument] the permissibility of an eternal knowledge which is connected with contingent things, as we shall mention later. If that can

be established concerning knowledge, we would apply it analogically to hearing and seeing. As for the rational course, we would say that it is known that the creator is more perfect than the created; and that it is also known that the seeing is more perfect than the one who does not see, and the one who hears is more perfect than the one who does not hear. Therefore, it would be impossible to affirm the attribute of perfection to the creature and not to the Creator. There are two premises which necessitate admitting the soundness of our assertion. Concerning which [of these two premises] is the dispute?

*If it is said:*

The dispute is in your saying that it is necessary that a creator be more perfect than the created.

*We would say:*

This should be admitted by the [force] of the [provisions] of the Divine Revelation—as well as rationally. The Muslim community (*ummah*) and intellectuals are all agreed upon it. This [kind] of question does not issue from a believer. He whose intellect can accept [the existence of] a powerful agent who is able to create what is higher and nobler than he is, would be stripping himself of the human instinct [which rejects such absurdity], and his tongue would be uttering what his heart would shrink from accepting if it [i.e. his heart] is to understand what [i.e. the tongue] has uttered. For this [reason] we do not see intelligent persons who believe in such a doctrine.

*If it is said:*

The dispute concerns the second premise, viz. your saying that a see-er is more perfect and that the faculties of hearing and sight are perfection.





*We would say:*

This too is self-evident because knowledge is perfection, and the hearing and seeing are secondary perfections[4] for knowledge. We shall demonstrate that they [hearing and seeing] are a kind of complementary perfection for knowledge and imagination. Whoever knows something which he does not see, and then sees it, gains further knowledge of that thing and perfection. How could it be said that such [perfection] occurs to the creature and not to the creator; or how could it be said that it is not perfection? If it is not perfection, then it is defect, or it is neither defect nor perfection.[75a] Any of these classifications is absurd. Therefore, it is clear that the right [opinion] is what we have said.

*If it is said:*

You are bound to admit this regarding the perception acquired by the faculties of smell, taste, and touch because their absence is imperfection, and their presence is perfection in perception, because the perfection of the knowledge of one who knows the flavour is not like the perfection of the knowledge of one who perceives by the faculty of smelling and likewise by the faculty of taste. It is one thing to know about an object of taste and quite another to perceive it by the faculty of taste.

*The answer is* that authoritative scholars have unequivocally affirmed various kinds of perceptions[5] together with hearing, sight, and knowledge,[76a] which are perfection in perception to the exclusion of the causes that are customarily connected with them, like touching and contact because these are improper to God. They also permit that the faculty of sight may

perceive without the object of sight being opposite to it.[6] In the application of this analogy is the answer to this question, and nothing prevents its use. But since the Divine Revelation provided nothing except the terms: "Hearing," "Sight," and "Knowledge," it would be impossible to predicate others. Imperfection in perception could in no way be possible for God.

*If it is said*:

This would lead to the affirmation of pleasure and pain for God. A numb man who does not feel the pain of beating is imperfect, and an impotent[77a] who does not delight in sexual intercourse is imperfect. Likewise, the loss of appetite is an imperfection; so it is proper to attribute appetite to God.

*We say*:

These matters point to origination. They are in themselves, if examined, imperfections and require matters which in turn require[78a] temporal origination. Pain is imperfection and requires a cause which is a "blow". And the "blow" is a contact occurring between bodies. Pleasure, if investigated, [would be found to be] due to the disappearance of pain or the attainment of what is needed and desired. Appetite and need are imperfections; therefore, what depends upon imperfection is imperfection. Appetite means the quest for what is suitable, and there is no need except when what is sought is lacking and no pleasure except when what is non-existent is obtained. All that which is possible for God to make existent is existent. He does not lack anything so that He may become desirous by seeking it and pleased by obtaining it. How could these matters, then, be conceived about Him?





*If it is said*:

Failing to suffer from and feel the beating are imperfections for the benumbed; that its [i.e. pain of beating's] perception is perfection—that the lack of appetite in one's stomach is imperfection and its presence a perfection,[79a] viz. it is perfection in relation to its opposite which destroys it; becoming, thus, perfection in relation to destruction because imperfection is better than destruction. It is, therefore, not perfection in itself contrary to knowledge and the above-mentioned perceptions. This much you should understand.

## *Notes*

1. These two attributes Ghazālī considers as perfections of the living, and the knowing.

2. By *Ahl al-Ijmā'*, Ghazālī, merely means those learned men whose wisdom and excellence in the sciences of religion are attested to by the community of Muslims.

3. See note 2 to Chapter II above.

4. According to Ibn Sīnā, the soul is the first entelechy (perfection or actuality) of a natural body possessed of organs. This is the most comprehensive definition of the soul, which, when added to the differentiae, would yield the definition of the species, so to speak. "Every species of the soul includes the lower soul and transcends." The qualification of perfection by "first" suggests, as F. Rahman points out, a distinction between two kinds of actuality corresponding to knowledge or thinking (*Al-Najāt, Maqālāh fi an-Nafs*, pp. 157-8; *Avicenna's Psychology*, p. 72).

5. Probably Ghazālī means mystical perception which is considered by Ṣūfis as the light kind of perception.

6. Ghazālī is pointing here to the *beatific vision* which Ghazālī has discussed at length from a Neoplatonic standpoint in *Iqtiṣād*, pp. 60-73. He rejects the idea that vision could only be acquired if the object of vision were in a direction. That discussion could be summed as follows:

Those who claim that for a thing to be visible implies its being in a direction build their argument on the basis of the fact that they have never seen anything except in a direction. Thus they pass judgments on everything on the basis of existent beings only. But if it were possible for us to

pass judgment on everything on the basis of concrete examples, the anthropomorphists (*Mujassimah*) would be right in their claim that God is a body, because God is an Actor, and they have not seen any actor except in a body. Hence those who hold that for a thing to be visible must be in a direction are no better than the anthropomorphists.

Further, most of the Mu'tazilah accept that God sees Himself and the world, though He is not in a direction either in relation to Himself or in relation to the world. Once this is accepted, their whole argument about the impossibility of God's Vision on the assumption that for a thing to be visible it must be in a direction falls. For if God can see Himself and the world without being in a direction, He can also be seen without His being in a direction. Pp. 62-63.

Ghazālī concludes his discussion by saying that vision is a kind of perception and that only those who are pure from material attachments could see God. Excepting Ghazālī's idea that God can be seen by the eye, not different from the Mu'tazilah who say that God shall be seen by the hearts.



## *Chapter VI*

## THE SEVENTH ATTRIBUTE: CONCERNING SPEECH ![1]

We assert, as is the consensus of all Muslims, that the creator of the world is speaking. You should know that those wishing to affirm divine speech through[80a] the premise that reason judges permissible that the creatures oscillate between command and prohibition, and through the premise that any attribute which is permissible for the creatures depends upon an attribute necessary for the creator, are grossly mistaken because the proponents of such views would be told: if you mean the permissibility of their [i.e. the creatures] being commanded by their [fellow-creatures] of whom speech is conceived, this would be accepted; but if you think of such permissibility as being common to both the creatures and the creator, then you would be begging the question, and this could not be accepted. If one attempts to affirm the divine speech on [the authority of] the consensus and/or on [the strength] of the Tradition of the Messenger, one would wrong oneself because the consensus leans on the Tradition of the Messenger; and if one denies the Benefactor's being speaking, one necessarily denies the concept of messengership since being a messenger means transmitting the speech of the sender. If it is inconceivable that the one who asserts that he is a sender speaks, how could a messenger be conceived? We do not, for example, listen to one who tells of

being the messenger of the earth or the mountain to us, because we believe in the impossibility of a speech or a message from either the mountain or the earth. To God alone is the highest ideal.

Whoever believes in the absurdity of attributing speech to God could not possibly believe in a messenger, because whoever deems the divine speech a lie would necessarily deny its transmission. The message is an expression of the transmission of the speech, and the messenger is an expression of the transmitter. It seems that a third premise is the correct course which we have followed in affirming [to God], "hearing" and "sight," viz. that speech is [an attribute] of the "living". It is said either that [speech] is perfection or imperfection—or that it is neither imperfection nor perfection—but since it is absurd to say that it is not imperfection and/or neither perfection nor imperfection, it would be necessarily established that it is perfection. Therefore, every perfection which is an attribute of man is *a fortiori* a necessary existence for the Creator[81a] as we have pointed out above.

*If it is said* :

The speech which you have made the source of your speculation is the speech of the creatures.[82a] By that is either meant the sounds and letters, the power to produce them, or a third meaning distinct from these two. If what is meant is the sounds and letters, they are contingent things and some contingent things are perfections to us but could not be imagined to subsist in God's essence. If [speech] subsists in something other than Him, He would not be speaking through it, but rather the locus in which [speech] subsists would be the speaker.[83a] If what is meant is the power





to produce sounds, then it is perfection; but a speaker is not a speaker because of his power to produce sounds only, but because of his creation of speech in himself. God is able to create sounds and unto Him alone is the perfection of power. God does not speak through [sound] unless He creates that sound in Himself which is absurd because, by creating sound in Himself, He would be a locus for contingent things. Therefore, it is impossible that He be speaking. If by speech a third meaning is meant, this would be unintelligible and the affirmation of what is unintelligible is absurd.[2]

*We say:*

This classification is accurate and the question in all its dichotomies is acknowledged except for the denial of the third category [i.e. inner speech].[3] We admit the possibility of the subsistence of sounds in His essence and the absurdity of His being speaking in this manner. We say, however, that man is called speaking from two perspectives:

(*a*) Through sound and letters, i.e. vowels and consonents.

(*b*) Through inner speech (*ḥadithu-n-nafs*) which is neither sound nor letter and which is perfection not impossible to God and does not imply contingency.

We affirm to God the inner speech only. There is no way to deny man the inner speech which is something distinct from the power to speak and distinct from sound. A person would say: "Last night I made up a speech in mind (*fi nafsī*)." It is also said: in the mind (*nafs*) of so and so is a speech and he wants to utter it. The poet says:

Be not bewildered by
The writing of one created
'Till his calligraphy be
With the speech equated.
For, speech is in the mind
But by the tongue articulated.[4]

What poets utter indicates a self-evident concept in whose perception all men are equal and which could not be denied.

*If it is said:*

This interpretation of inner speech is acknowledged. It, however, neither lies outside the knowledge and perception[84a] of things nor is it absolutely a genus. What scholars call inner speech (*kalāmu-n-nafs*) and inner whispering (*ḥadīthu-n-nafs*)[85a] is the skill of combining terms, phrases and the composition of intelligible concepts which are known in specific order. There is nothing in the mind (*qalb*) except intelligible concepts which is the "knowledge," and heard terms which are known through hearing and these, too, are the knowledge of what terms are set for,[86a] and to that is added the composition of concepts and the arrangement of terms in specific order, such process is called cogitation (*fikr*) and the power producing such process is termed the cogitative faculty (*quwwah mufakkirah*) If you establish, however for the mind something other than this very cogitation (*fikr*) which is the arrangement of terms, concepts and their composition; and if you establish something other than the cogitative faculty (*quwwah mufakkirah*), which is the power [that arranges terms, concepts and their composition]; and if you establish something other than the knowledge of separate and combined concepts,





and if you establish something other than the knowledge of terms which are composed of individual and combined letters, then you will be establishing an atrocious matter unknown to us To clarify this we maintain that speech is either command or prohibition, either informative or interrogative statements.

As for the informative, it is a statement indicative of a knowledge in the mind of one who declares it. He who knows something and knows the term designated[87a] to indicate that thing like "beating" (*ḍarb*), for example, a concept which can be perceived by the senses and is a term composed of the letters (*ḍād, rā'* and *bā'*), designated by the Arabs to indicate a sensible concept which is another knowledge —he has the ability to acquire these sounds with his tongue, the desire to indicate and the desire to acquire the term, then when his statement "beating" (*ḍarb*) is uttered, he would not be lacking a thing further than these matters [to inform of the concept "beating"]. His saying (*ḍarb*) would be complete; it would be a declarative statement (*khabar*) and speech. Anything you judge aside from this would be easy to refute.

As for the interrogative (*istikhbār*), it is an indication of a demand to know. Command, however, is an indication of a demand to do what is commanded. Prohibition and all other parts of speech are analogical[27] to this. No speech could conceivably fall out of these forms of speech. Of these forms of speech, however, some, like sound, are impossible to God, and others are existent to God like will, knowledge, and power. Anything else is unknown to us and is unintelligible.

But the speech which we mean is a concept

distinct from these forms of speech. So let us deal with it within the scope of one of the parts of speech, viz. the command (*amr*) so that our explanation will not be unduly long.

*We say:*

A master's command to his slave: "Stand up!" (*qum*), is a term indicating a meaning. The meaning indicated is in itself a speech. But this you have not taken into consideration and, therefore, there is no need for hair-splitting. To refer this command, viz. "Stand up," to a desire to command [88a] or to the desire to indicate an existing state of affairs, could be wrongly suggested. But it is absurd to suggest that it is a desire to indicate a state of affairs because the indication requires an object of indication which is neither an indication nor a desire to indicate. It is equally absurd to suggest that it is the desire of one who commands.[89a] One may command without wishing compliance; nay, one may [in fact] dread compliance as in the case of one who makes excuses to a *sulṭān* intent upon killing him as punishment for his beating his slave, by saying that he only beat his slave because of his disobedience, the evidence being that he would command the slave in the presence of the [*sulṭān*] and the slave would disobey. Now, if he becomes litigious and commands the slave in the presence of the [*sulṭān*] by saying: "Stand up—I am giving you a decisive order for which you have no excuse[90a] to disobey," and the slave would not stand, then at that moment he is unquestionably commanding [the slave] to stand up, but he is [also] unquestionably not wishing the slave to obey the order. Any fair-minded person would judge that the command which subsisted in the master's mind





and which was indicated by the imperative is speech, yet altogether distinct from the desire to stand.

*If it is said:*

This man is not commanding in reality but rather feigning a command.

*We would say:*

This is false for two reasons:

(*a*) If he were not really commanding, his apology would not have been easily accepted by the [*sulṭān*] and he would be told: command could not be imagined from you at that moment because yours is a demand for compliance and it is inconceivable that at that moment you would want compliance which would be the cause for your destruction. Furthermore, how could you desire to prove something by disobedience[91a] to your command when you are incapable of really commanding it because you are incapable of wanting that in which lies your destruction and in the slave's compliance lies your destruction. Now, there is no doubt that he is capable of using such a proof and that his proof stands and earns the acceptance of his apology and that the proof[92a] is established by disobedience to the command. So if the command could not[93a] be conceived despite the master's hatred of the slave's compliance, we could absolutely not conceive his use of it. This is decisively convincing to those who ponder it.

(*b*) If the [master] tells this incident to the *muftī* and swears a final divorce that after the *sulṭān's* reprimand, he commanded the slave to stand up, in the *sulṭān's* presence, and that the slave did not obey him, every Muslim would decide that his divorce had not taken place. The official expounder of Islamic

law [*muftī*] cannot say: "I know that it is impossible that at that moment you would want the slave's compliance, which would cause your destruction. Command implies the wish of compliance and if you have commanded,[94a] then you must have wished compliance." This *muftī's* view would be invalid by the consensus. The presence of a concept which is indicated by the expression and which is distinct from what the opponents have enumerated[95a] above has, therefore, been unmasked. We call this [concept] speech, and it is a genus different from all types of knowledge, wills, and beliefs; the affirmation of which is not impossible to God; nay, it should be attributed to Him because it is a kind of speech[96a]—the eternal speech we mean.

As for letters (*ḥurūf*), they are contingent and are indications of speech. The indication is neither the object indicated nor does it possess its attributes even if its indication is essential like the world which is a contingent thing that indicates an eternal Maker. How, therefore, is it unlikely that contingent letters would indicate an eternal attribute although this is an indication by convention?

Since the question of inner speech is a subtle one, it defies the understanding of those who are intellectually weak, who affirm only letters and sounds. Concerning this doctrine [various] questions and objections will be directed against them, some of which we will mention so that a method of refuting other problems may be delineated.

The first [objection] concerns the question of those who ask how did Moses (Mūsā) hear God's speech.

*They ask:*

Did he hear sounds and letters? If your answer is





affirmative, then according to you he [Moses] did not hear God's speech because God's speech is neither by letters nor sound; and if he did not hear letters or sound, how could he hear what was neither letter nor sound?

*We answer:*

He heard God's speech, which is an eternal attribute subsisting in God's essence, and he heard it neither by letter nor sound. Your question: How did he hear God's speech?, is a question that issues from one who does not understand what is required of the question "how". One should understand what is required by "how" and by what it can be answered in order to know the absurdity of the question.

*We say:*

Hearing is a kind of perception and the question: How did he hear?, is like the question of one who asks: How do you perceive the sweetness of sugar by the organ of taste? There are only two ways of decisively answering this question:

(1) By giving sugar to the questioner so that he may taste it and perceive its flavour and sweetness. Then we say to him: "I have perceived it just as you have perceived it now." This is the [only] satisfactory answer and complete definition [we may give such a man].

(2) The second way applies when the first way is impossible either for the lack of sugar or for the lack of the questioner's having tasted sugar. Therefore, we tell him: "We perceive its flavour just as you perceive the sweetness of honey." This answer would be correct from one aspect and wrong from another. The correct aspect is that it is a definition of something

similar to the one in question in one aspect, viz. the principle of sweetness, though it is not similar to it in all aspects because the flavour of honey is different from the flavour of sugar. So if it is comparable to it in one aspect, viz. the aspect of sweetness, this kind of comparison is all that is possible in this case. But if the questioner had never tasted the sweetness of anything, it would be impossible to answer him and to make him understand what he had asked about. He would be like the impotent man who asks about the pleasure of sexual intercourse though he has never experienced it. It would be difficult to make such a man understand except by likening sexual intercourse to the pleasure of eating which would be a false analogy because the pleasure of intercourse and the state which the participant attains is not at all similar to the state perceived by the eater except inasmuch as the general concept, pleasure, has included it. If he had never been pleased, no answer would be possible. Likewise, as for anyone who asks: How did Moses hear God's speech?, he could be satisfactorily answered only by our making him hear God's eternal speech, and that is impossible for us because that is one of the privileges of Moses, and we are incapable of making the [questioner] hear it, or by comparing it to something which he [the questioner] has heard. Nothing that he hears is like God's speech because all the things heard with which the [questioner] is familiar are sounds, and sounds are not similar to what is not a sound, hence the difficulty in making him understand. Moreover, if a deaf man asks: How do you hear sounds [though he never heard a sound]?, we would not be able to answer him, because if we say: As you





perceive visible things for it [hearing] is a perception in the ear, like the perception of sight in the eye. This would be erroneous, because the perception of sounds is not like the seeing of colours. This example points to the absurdity of the question. Moreover, if someone asks: How do you see the Lord of Lords in the hereafter?, to answer him would be absurd because he is asking about the mode (*kayfiyyah*) of that which does not have a mode. What the questioner means by "how is it" is "like which thing of what we know is it?" Since what he is asking about is not similar to anything he knows, the answer would be impossible and this does not point to the non-existence of God's essence. Likewise, the impossibility of such an answer does not indicate the speechlessness of God. Rather, it should be believed that His speech is an eternal attribute, having no likeness, just as His essence (*dhāt*) is an eternal essence which has no likeness. And just as we see His essence in a manner different and unlike our seeing bodies and accidents, His speech is heard in a manner different and unlike the hearing of letters and sounds.

The second objection. *If it is asked :* Is God's speech located in copies of the Qur'ān (*maṣāḥif*) or not?[5] If it [God's speech] is located there, how does the eternal reside in the contingent? If you say no, this would be contrary to the consensus, because the respect of a copy of the Qur'ān (*muṣḥaf*) is so much demanded by consensus that the ritually impure is forbidden from touching it. This is so only because God's speech is in it [in the *muṣḥaf*].

*We, therefore, say* that God's speech is written in the books (*maṣāḥif*), preserved in the hearts, and read

by tongues. But as for paper, ink, writing, consonants, and vowels, they are all contingent things because they are bodies and accidents in bodies and all that is contingent. And if we say it is written in the books (*maṣāḥif*), (I mean the attribute of the Eternal, Glory to Him), this does not require that the eternal is located in the book (*muṣḥaf*), just as, if we say that "fire" is written in the book, it would not necessarily follow that the essence of fire is located in it because if it [i.e. essence of fire] resides in [the book], the book (*muṣḥaf*) would be burnt, and he who utters [the word] fire, if the essence of fire is located in his tongue, his tongue would be burnt. The fire (*nār*) is a hot body having a verbal sign which consists of the articulated sounds that produce the [letters] *nūn*, *alif*, and *rā'* Therefore, the hot [body] that burns is the essence of the thing indicated and not the sign itself. Likewise, the eternal speech that subsists in God's essence is the thing indicated and not the sign. Letters are signs and signs have a sanctity because the Divine Law (*shar'*) made them sacrosanct Because of this [sanctity], respect of the Book (*muṣḥaf*) is required, because it embodies a pointer to God's [eternal] attribute.

The third objection is their demand: Is the Qur'ān God's speech or not? If you say no, you violate the consensus, and if you say yes, then what is it except the letters and sounds? It is acknowledged that a reader reads by letters and sounds.

*We say:*

There are three expressions involved here: "reading" (*qirā'ah*), "what is read" (*maqrū'*) and "*Qur'ān*". As for what is read (*maqrū'*), it is God's speech, i.e.





His eternal attribute which subsists in His essense. As for the "reading" [*qirā'ah*], it is on the tongue, as an expression of the act of the reader [*qāri'*] who began it, after he had abstained from it, and [to say that a thing is] contingent means only that it has been begun after it was not. If the opponent does not understand this [meaning] from the [term] contingent (*ḥādith*), then let us abandon the terms contingent and created, and say that reading (*qirā'ah*) is an act begun by the reader (*qāri'*) after he was not doing it and it is sensible [i.e. perceived by the senses]. As for the [term] "*Qur'ān*," it could be applied as meaning what is read (*maqrū'*). If this is what is meant by it, then it is eternal, not created. This is what the pious forefathers meant by their saying that the Qur'ān is God's speech, not a created thing[6]—meaning what is read (*maqrū'*) by the tongues. And if what is meant by it is the reading itself (*qirā'ah*), which is the act of the reader (*qāri'*), then the act of the reader does not precede the reader's existence, and what does not precede the existence of the contingent (*ḥādith*) is contingent. And in sum, he who says that he [the reader] has originated by choice, consisting of sound and its articulation through letters, and before which he was silent, is eternal, should not be partner to discussion or obligated but, rather, it is suitable that he be known as a poor fool who does not know what he says, neither knowing the meaning of letters nor the meaning of contingent. If he knew these things, he would know that if he is himself created, then what issues from him too is created and he would know that the eternal is not transferable to a contingent essence—so let us not dwell on

what is self-evident. He who says "in the name of God" (*bismi-l-lāhi*), if the *sīn* is not after the [*bā'*], it would not be Qur'ān, but rather it would be an error and if the *sīn* is after something else and following it, how could it be eternal? We mean by the eternal *a parte ante* that which never follows anything else.

The fourth objection is their saying that the community (*ummah*) of Islam is unanimously agreed that the Qur'ān is a miracle of the Messenger of God (God bless him and give him peace), and that it is God's speech, and that it consists of chapters (*suwar*, sing.—*sūrah*) and verses (*āyāt*), having periods and beginnings. This being so, how [they ask] could the eternal have endings and beginnings, and how could it be divided into chapters and verses, and how could the eternal be a miracle of the Messenger when a miracle is an unusual act, contrary to nature, and when every act is created? How then could the speech of God, Most High, be eternal?

*We say:*

Do you deny that the term [*Qur'ān*] is commonly applied both to the act of reading (*qirā'ah*) and to what is read (*maqrū'*)? If you acknowledge this fact [i.e. the equivocality of the expression "*Qur'ān*"], then [we may observe] that all in all that the Muslims have mentioned[97a] in describing the Qur'ān as eternal, like their saying that the Qur'ān is God's uncreated speech, they meant what is read (*al-maqrū'*). And in all that with which they have described it which the idea of eternity does not permit, as its being chapters (*suwar*) and verses having endings and beginnings, they meant expressions that the point to the eternal





attribute, which is the act of reading (*qirā'ah*). If the term is considered equivocal, the contradiction would no longer exist. The consensus is that only God is eternal; and God, Most High, says, "till it returns like an aged (*qadīm*) palm-bough" But we say that the term "eternal" is common [i e. equivocal, ***mushtarak***] to two concepts. If it is affirmed from one aspect, it would not be impossible to negate it from another; the same applies to the term "*Qur'ān*". This is an answer to all the contradictory designations which they reiterate even if they deny its being equivocal. We definitely know its [i.e. the term *Qur'ān's*] application is to the meaning of what is real (*al-maqrū'*) and that it is clearly shown by the pronouncements of the pious forefathers, that the Qur'ān, God's speech, is not created despite their knowledge that they, their voices, their readings, and their acts, are all created. As for its application to the act of reading (*al-qirā'ah*)[98a] the poet has said:

They have sacrificed the hoary-headed man on whose forehead prostration marked a sign,[7] One who divides the night between praising and *Qur'āning*, meaning "reading". The messenger of God, God bless him and give him peace, said, "God has not granted permission to a prophet as he has permitted me the prolonging and modulating sweetly [my voice] in reciting the Qur'ān." Prolonging and modulating sweetly the voice is done in the act of reading. All the pious forefathers have maintained that the Qur'ān, God's speech, is not created, that it is a miraole which is the act of God. Since they have known that the eternal *a parte ante* could not be miraculous, it is evident that it is an equivocal term.[8] He who does not

understand the equivocality of the term would imagine contradictions in these applications.

The fifth objection is the assertion that it is acknowledged that nothing but sounds are heard now [i.e. in this world], and God's speech is heard now according to the consensus of the community and the evidence of God's saying, "And if any of the idolaters seeks of thee protection, grant him protection till he hears the words of God."

*We say:*

If the sound which the idolater (*mushrik*) hears at the time he seeks protection is God's eternal speech which subsists in His essence, what merit does Moses, peace be upon him, have over the idolaters, in his being called the one who spoke with God, since they hear as he had heard.

No[99a] answer to this objection can be conceived except by saying that what Moses, peace be upon him, heard is an eternal attribute subsisting in God's essence, and what the idolater hears is sounds pointing to that attribute. What makes the above description quite clear is the idea of equivocality, either in the expression "speech," in which case it is calling the signs by the name of that to which the signs point, "the speech" here is definitely the inner speech [of God]. As for the terms, because they point to it, they are called "speech" just as they are called knowledge (*'ilm*). If you say: I have heard so and so's knowledge, you hear only his speech that points to his knowledge, or [the equivocality lies in the expression] "what is heard," because known by hearing something other than it could be called an object of hearing just as you say I have heard the speech of the prince (*amīr*)





from the tongue of his messenger when it is acknowledged that the prince's speech does not subsist in the tongue of his messenger, but what is heard is the utterance of the messenger that is indicative to the prince's speech. This is what we have wanted to mention for the clarification of the doctrine of the Sunnites [*Ahl as-Sunnah*] concerning the inner speech which is thought to be enigmatic. We shall mention the remainder of the properties of speech when we deal with the properties of the attributes in the second section if God, Most High, so wishes.

## Notes

1. The Mu'tazilah considered God's speech as similar to ordinary speech which is composed from vowels and consonants. By speech they meant the act by which a speaker expresses the concepts in his mind. Since the Qur'ān is composed of sounds and letters and these being contingent, the Qur'ān then must be contingent. The Qur'ān, they argued, is not eternal because it is not an attribute of God, but rather an act of His. God creates speech in the "tablet" or in the angel Gabriel or in the prophets. The Mu'tazilah pointed to many verses of the Qur'ān which would support their claim that the Qur'ān is created. There are in the Qur'ān such verses that tell of the Qur'ān being sent down in chapters and parts and this certainly is a characteristic of a contingent thing (*Al-Milal*, pp. 35, 68, 46).

Al-Ash'arī and the Ash'arites in general believed in two kinds of speech, one of them being mental and they call it inner speech (*kalāmu-n-nafs*) which is an essential attribute of God. The other kind of speech is the ordinary speech composed of words and letters The former is God's speech and is eternal while the second is contingent. Al-Ash'arī maintains that God's speech is one and it is "command and prohibition, informative or interrogative statements, promise or warning". These various aspects of the divine speech are due to considerations related to the speech and not to a multiplicity in the speech or expressions. The terms which descend to the prophets are indications of the eternal speech while the indications themselves are contingent. According to al-Ash'arī, a speaker is the one in whom speech subsists. The Mu'tazilah, however, consider the speaker the one who "does" the speech. They, however, consider the expression, speech,

either metaphorically or equivocally (*Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, pp. 67-8 ). Although al-Matūrīdī does adhere to the Ash'arite concept of the divine speech, he criticises them when they say that the physical book could be burnt because God's speech is an attribute and the attribute cannot be separated from the one described. He says this is "idiocy" because what is annihilated is known through God's knowledge. He then asks: Do you see that the attribute of knowledge would be annihilated because what is annihilated is known? Likewise, he adds, is God's speech; it cannot be described as being subject to annihilation because of what is written in the copies (*maṣāḥif*) of the Qur'ān. We do not say, he adds, that the speech is not alighting in the copies of the Qurān so that it may be described as subject to annihilation (*Sharḥ al-Fiqh al-Akbar*, p. 20).

2. See note 1 above.
3. *Kalāmu-n-nafs* is al-Ash'arī's unique concept through which he and later Ash'arites tried to explain what they considered to be God's eternal speech. See note 1 above.
4. From a poem by the poet al-Akhṭal.
5. See note 1 above.
6. See note 1 above.
7. The reference is to the murderers of 'Uthmān, the third Khalīfah.
8. In Islamic philosophical works, "restatements of Aristotle's distinction between 'equivocal *mushtarak* and 'univocal' *mutawāṭih*, terms usually contain another type of terms which stand midway between these two. It is called 'ambiguous' or 'amphibolous' *mustarikah* terms" (Wolfson, "The Amphibolous Terms in Aristotle, Arabic Philosophy and Maimonides," *Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 31, 1938, pp. 151-73). Aristotle in his "*categories*" gives man and his portrait as an example of an equivocal (*mushtarah*) term for they both claim to being "animal". An Arabic example is the term "*'ayn*" which means both "eye" and "spring".



## *Chapter VII*

## THE SECOND SECTION OF THIS CARDINAL POINT

It concerns the general properties of the attributes —what is common to them all and that in which they differ. These are four[100a] properties.

The first property. The seven attributes which we have proved are not the essence [i.e. not God's essence], but rather they are distinct and superadded to the essence (*dhāt*).[1] We maintain that the Maker of the world is knowing according to knowledge, living according to life, powerful according to power, and so is the case in the rest of the attributes. The Mu'tazilah and the philosophers deny that. They maintain that the eternal is "one essence" and that it is not permissible to affirm multiple eternal essences[101a] They also maintain that the proof points to this being knowing, powerful and living, not to knowledge, life and power. Let us single out "knowledge" so that we do not have to repeat all of the attributes. They [Mu'tazilah and the philosophers] claim that knowingness [being *'ālim*] is a mode (*ḥālah*)[2] of the essence (*dhāt*)—not an attribute; but the Mu'tazilah oppose [the philosophers] in two attributes when they say that He is willing according to a will superadded to the essence and is speaking according to speech which is superadded to the essence except that He creates the will not in a locus and creates the speech in an inanimate body[3] and "thus" He becomes speaking according to it. The philosophers pushed ahead



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their analogy to "the will" and as for speech, they say He is speaking in the sense that He creates in the essence of the Prophet the hearing of arranged sounds either in [the Prophet's] sleep or in his state of consciousness, and that these sounds would have absolutely no existence outside the essence. Rather, [these sounds exist] in the hearing of the Prophet just as a sleeping person would see non-existent individuals though their forms occur in his mind (*dimāgh*). He also hears non-existent sounds which a person present [at the side] of a sleeping person does not hear while the person who is sleeping may hear [these sounds] and become terrified and disturbed and [hence] wake frightened and alarmed.[4] They [also] claim that if a prophet ranks high in prophecy, the purity of his soul leads to his seeing, in his state of consciousness, marvellous forms and he hears from them harmonious sounds which he learns by heart while those around him hear and see nothing.[5] By [these marvellous forms] they mean the vision of the angels and the hearing of the Qur'ān from them. But [a prophet] who does not rank high in prophecy sees these [forms] only in [his] sleep. This is the gist of the doctrines of the misguided.

Our purpose is to affirm the attributes and the decisive proof is that, that which helps [in affirming] that God is knowing, helps in [affirming] that He had knowledge because what is understood from our saying "knowing" and "has knowledge" is one and the same thing, since the intellect [102a] intellects an essence and intellects it in a mode and as an attribute. Therefore, it [i.e., the intellect] would be intellecting the attribute and what is described. The attribute, "know-





ledge," for example, is expressed in two statements. One of them is a long statement like our saying: In this essence (*dhāt*) knowledge subsists.

The other is concise and short. It is being made concise by morphology and derivation, viz. "The essence is knowing," just as man sees a person and sees a shoe, and he [man] sees his [the person's] foot entering into the shoe. He [man] may express what he has seen in a long statement by saying: "The foot of this man is entering into his shoe," or, he may express it by [simply] saying: "He is shod." The only meaning of his "being shod" is that he has a shoe. The Mu'tazilah conception that the subsistence of knowledge in the essence necessitates a mode called "knowingness" for the essence is pure infatuation because knowledge is that mode. The only meaning of his being knowing is that the essence (*dhāt*) is [in] an attribute and in a mode. That attribute and that mode are the knowledge only. But those who derive mean ings from terms would no doubt err. And if the terms repeat themselves because of derivation, they would definitely err. The derivation of the term "knowing" (*'ālim*) from the term "knowledge" (*'ilm*) produced this mistake and, therefore, [people] should not be misled by it. Because of this all that which has been said and elaborated upon concerning cause and effect is refuted.[6] The refutation of this is *a priori* to those whose hearing never experienced the repetition of those terms. As for those in whose understanding such terms stick, it would be possible only to erase them from their [heads] by a long tract which this brief treatise cannot bear.

*The conclution.* We ask the philosophers and the Mu'tazilah: Is what is understood from our saying

"knowing" ('ālim) different from our saying existent (*mawjūd*), or is there what points to the existence in it of something additional?

If they say, "no," then he who says a "knowing existent" is like his saying an "existent existent" and this is obviously absurd. But if there is something additional to its concept, is it [i.e. this addition] specific to the essence of the existent or not? If they say, "it is not," this would be absurd, because then it would have nothing to do with its being an attribute to the existent [i.e. God]. But if it is specified by its essence [i.e. the essence of the existent], then what we mean by "knowledge" is [exactly] that which is the existent specified addition which is superadded to the existent and from[103a] which it would be better to derive for the existent, because of it, the term "knowing" (*'ālim*). This may help them[104a] understand the meaning. The dispute, therefore, becomes limited to the term and if I want to challenge the philosophers, I would say: Is what is understood from our saying "powerful" the same as our saying "knowing" (*'ālim*), or is it something else? If it is exactly the same, then it is as if we have said a "powerful powerful," which is sheer repetition. And if it is something else, then that is what we mean and you have, thereby, affirmed two meanings One of them is expressed by the term "power" (*qudrah*) and the other by the term "knowledge" (*'ilm*), thus bringing the whole dispute once more to the term.

*If it is said:*

Is what is understood from your saying, command, prohibition (*amr wa nahy*) and information (*khabar*)[105a] the same as what is understood from your saying, commanding (*āmir*), prohibitor (*nāhin*), and informing





(*mukhbir*) or is it something else?

If these terms are the same, this would be sheer repetition and if they are something else, then He should have a speech which is command (*amr*) and another which is prohibition (*nahy*) and a third which is information and, furthermore, He should address every prophet[106a] with a different speech. Likewise, is what is understood from your saying, "He knows the accidents," the same as what is understood from your saying, "He knows the substances (*jawāhir*)," or is it something else? If it is the same, then the one who knows the substances (*jawāhir*) should know the accidents through[107a] the same knowledge (*'ilm*) so that one knowledge may be related to multiple and infinite objects. But if it is something else, God, Most High, must have various infinite knowledges (*'ulūm*). Likewise the [divine] speech, power, and will, and all those attributes whose relations to their objects are infinite should, therefore, be infinite in numbers, which is absurd. If it is permissible that there be one attribute which is at the same time the "command," the "prohibition," and the "information," and would serve to replace these different terms, then it should be permissible that there be one attribute which replaces knowledge, power, life, and the rest of the attributes Consequently, if this is permissible, it should be permissible that the essence (*dhāt*) be sufficient by itself and that therein lies the concept (*ma'nā*) of power, knowledge, and the rest of the attributes without anything being superadded, thus making the doctrine of the Mu'tazilah and the philosophers a necessary corollary.

*The answer is to say:*

This question stirs the greatest problem of attributes and it would be inappropriate to solve it in

a brief treatise. But since the pen has already slipped to its mention, we may as well hint at the starting point on the way to its solution, though it is a question which most of the faithful[108a] have avoided[109a] by reverting to the adherence to the Book (Qur'ān) and the consensus. They [i.e. the faithful] say that the Divine Law (*Shar'*) cites these attributes because it points to knowledge (*'ilm*) and from this the oneness [of knowledge] is undoubtedly understood. No addition to the oneness has been cited, and, therefore, we do not believe it. But this does not seem to be satisfactory because (*Shar'*) has cited command, prohibition, information (*amr-nahy-khabar*), the Torah, the Bible, and the Qur'ān; what, then, prevents us from saying that command is not prohibition, that the Qur'ān is something other than the Torah, when it is cited that He, Most High, knows what is secret and what is open, the exoteric and the esoteric, the moistened and the dry, and so forth to all that which is included in the Qur'ān. The answer to this question may be what we should point to the beginning of its examination.

And that is that any intelligent group is forced to acknowledge[110a] that the proof points to a matter distinct from the existence of the essence of the Maker, and this is what is expressed by His being knowing (*'ālim*), powerful, and the others. This bears three probabilities: two extremes and a middle. Moderation, however, is the closest to accuracy.

As for the two extremes, one of them shows carelessness and that is the confining of oneself to think of one essence which expresses all these concepts and replaces them. This is the position of the philosophers[7] The second extreme is on the excessive side





and that is the affirmation of an attribute with infinite individuals such as knowledges, powers, and speech parallel to the number of the things related to these attributes. This is an excessiveness into which only the Mu'tazilah and some of the Karramites would delve.[8] The third opinion, which is our intention, and which is the middle course, is to say that different things have levels in proximity and remoteness in their differences. Two things may differ by their essences like the difference between motion and rest,[111a] between power and knowledge, between the substance and the accident. And whereas two things may come under the same definition and reality, they do not differ because of their essences but rather their difference is due to the difference of their relation.[112a] Indeed, the difference between power and knowledge is not like the difference between the knowledge of one blackness and the knowledge of another kind of blackness or whiteness, and this would be so if you define knowledge by a definition in which the knowledge of all the objects of knowledge would enter.

We, therefore, say that the golden mean in belief is to say that any difference is due to the difference of the essences in themselves. One of them would not be sufficient to replace the others which are different.[9] Therefore, it is necessary[113a] that knowledge be something other than power, and so are life and the rest of the seven attributes. It is also necessary that the attributes be something other than the essence inasmuch as the difference between the described essence and the attribute is stronger than the difference between any two attributes.

As for the knowledge of a thing, it does not differ from the knowledge of another except in the aspect

of its relation to the object of relationship It is not remote that the eternal attribute be distinguished by this characteristic, viz. the difference in things related should not necessitate a difference[114a] and multiplicity in it.

*If it is said :*

Nothing in what you have said eliminates the problem because if you admit a certain difference because[115a] of the difference of the object of relation, the problem would surely remain. Why do you investigate the cause of the difference after seeing that the difference does exist ?

*I say :*

The purpose of a supporter of a specific doctrine is to show, beyond question, the preponderance of his belief over that of the others and this we have definitely demonstrated since we have shown that there is only one course to follow among these three, or the invention of a fourth unintelligible course [would be further required] This only course, when contrasted with its two opposite[116a] extremes, its preponderance would be known definitely. If it were inevitable that it should be believed—and only one of these three could be believed ; ours being the closest of all three [to accuracy]—therefore, it should be believed. What remains to be considered are the implications that are required of this [third course] though the implications of the other two are even greater. Explaining[117a] away the implications of [our course] is possible but eliminating the difficulty entirely,[118a] while the subject under investigation is the eternal attributes of God which are beyond man's understanding, is an inscrutable task within the scope of such a book. This, therefore, is all we can say here. As for the Mu'tazilah, we shall





take them to task over their differentiation between power and will.

*We say :*

If it is possible that He be powerful without power, it would be permissible that He be willing without will, and there would be no difference between the two.

*If it is said :*

He is powerful in virtue of Himself [*bi nafsihī*][10] and, therefore, He is powerful over all the objects of power and, likewise, if He is willing in virtue of Himself, He would be willing the totality of the objects of will ; this would be absurd because the contradictory objects of will could be willed only in terms of either-or, not collectively, while power can possibly be related to two contradictory things.

*The answer is :*

You should say that He is willing in virtue of Himself, then becomes characterised by some of the contingent objects of will just as you have said that He is powerful unto Himself and that His power is related to only some of the contingent things because, according to you, the entire acts of animals and the generated things lie outside both His power and His will If this is possible *vis-a vis* power, it should be possible for will too.

As for the philosophers, they have fallen into contradictions concerning the attribute of speech. Their position is invalid from two aspects :

First, they say that God is speaking though[119a] they neither affirm the inner speech [*kalāmu-n-nafs*] nor do they affirm the existence of sounds externally. They, however, affirm the hearing of sounds which they hold are created in the ears of the Prophet, peace be upon him, without any external sound. If it is

permissible that He be described as speaking through that which occurs in the mind (*dimāgh*) of someone else [i e in the Prophet's mind],[120a] it should be permissible that He be described as sound-producing and moving through the existence of sound and motion in someone else, which is absurd.

Secondly, all that which they have mentioned is a rejection of the Divine Law *in toto* because what is perceived by a sleeping person is a phantasm, not real. If the Prophet's knowledge of the Divine Speech is attributed to imagination which is like confused dreams, the Prophet would not trust it and it would not be knowledge. On the whole, those [i.e. the philosophers] do not believe in religion and Islam. They merely embellish themselves with certain statements which they pronounce as a cautionary measure against the sword [i e. for fear of punishment]. The issue we have with them concerns the basis of the acts, the contingency of the world and the divine power (*qudrah*). We should not go with them into other [distracting] details.

*If it is said:*

Do you maintain that the divine attributes are something other than God?

*We say:*

This is wrong. When we say "Allah," we point to the essence (*dhāt*) together with the attributes, not to the essence alone because the term "*Allāh*" could not be predicated of an essence that is judged to be free from the divine attributes[121a] whereas it could not be said[122a] that jurisprudence is something other than the jurist; Zayd's hand is something other than Zayd, and the carpenter's hand is something other than the carpenter because part of what is included in the name would not be something other than what comes





under the name. Therefore, the hand of Sayd is neither Zayd himself nor is it something other than Zayd. Rather, either way you posit it would be absurd. Likewise, any part is neither something other than the whole nor is it the whole itself. If it is said that jurisprudence is something other than man, this is permissible, but it is not permissible to say that it is something other than the jurist because man is no indication of the attribute of jurisprudence. It is small wonder, therefore, that it be certainly permissible to say that the attribute is something other than the essence in which the attribute subsists. Likewise, it can be said that the accident that subsists in the essence "*jawhar*", is something *other* than the "*jawhar*," meaning that the concept [of the term accident] is something *other* than the concept [of the term essence]. This is possible on two conditions:

(1) That the Divine Law (*Shar'*) does not prevent its use and this is limited to God alone.

(2) It should not be understood from the term "other" that whose existence is possible to the exclusion of that which is other than it in relation to it. If this is understood, it would not be possible to say that Zayd's blackness is something other than Zayd because [blackness] does not exist without Zayd. Therefore, the definition of the concepts and the terms is being made clear and there is no sense in dwelling on what is self-evident.

## *Notes*

1. See our Chapter II.
2. The theory of modes (*aḥwāl*) is ascribed to Abū Hāshim head of the Bahshamite school and to his son Abū 'Alī al-Jubā'i. They did not deny

absolutely the existence of attributes but rather denied their subsistence in the essence as something superadded to it, affirming, however, their existence as something identical with the essence, the kind of existence which Abū Hāshim ascribes to what he calls modes (*aḥwāl*). (*Kitāb Ṭabaqāt al-Mu'tazilah*, p. 96, ed Susanna Diwald-Wilzer, Beirut, 1761 ; *Badādi*, pp. 18, 93, 169, 95, 111, 144.

3. See note I, Chapter VI.
4. Ibn Sīnā reduces speech to a kind of dream (*Al-Najāt*,, pp. 157-93).
5. Ibn Sīnā does not differ very much on this point .See ibid., pp. 157-93.
6. See Introduction and our Chapter II.
7. Philosophers and some of Mu'tazilah are agreed that God's essence expresse all these attributes. See Introduction and our Chapter II.
8. See our note on Karramites.
9. It is Ghazālī's contention that each attribute has a different essence and hence kind of relation and, therefore, all attributes must be different from each other. This he is directing against al-Ka'bī who reduced everything to the attribute of knowledge.
10. Wolfson discusses the terms *bi-nafsihi* and *li-dhatihi* in his article already mentioned in the *Homenaje A Millas Vallicrosa*, Vol. II, pp. 545-71.



## Chapter VIII

# THE SECOND PROPERTY OF THE ATTRIBUTES

We maintain that all the attributes subsist in His essence and none of them could possibly subsist without His essence, whether [this attribute] is in a locus or not.

As for the Mu'tazilah, they maintain that will does not subsist in His essence and, therefore, it is a contingent thing (*ḥādithah*),[1] that He is not a locus for contingent things, that [will] does not subsist in another locus because that would lead to His being a willer through that locus, and that [will] exists in no locus. They also claim that the divine speech does not subsist in God's essence because it is a contingent thing and, therefore, it subsists in a body (*jism*) which is inanimate so that He would not be speaking through it but, rather, the speaker is God, the Most Exalted.

As for the proof that the attributes should subsist in the essence, it would not be needed by those who have understood what we have presented above. Since the proof indicates the existence of the Maker, it necessarily indicates that the Maker is of such and such attributes and we mean nothing by His being of such and such attribute other than that He possesses that attribute. There is, surely, no difference between His having an attribute and the subsistence of that attribute in His essence.

We have already made clear the meaning of our statement that His being knowing is the same as say-

ing that there is knowledge in His essence, which is similar[123a] to the meaning of our statement that His being willing is the same as saying that will subsists in His essence. And, likewise, the meaning of our saying that will does not subsist in His essence is analogical to our statement that He does not will. Calling the divine essence "willing" through a will that does not subsist in it is like calling Him "moving" through a movement that does not subsist in Him. If will does not subsist in His essence, it will make no difference whether it is existent or non-existent. Therefore, the statement of those who say that He is "willing" is a meaningless, erroneous term; and likewise, so is the term "speaking". He is speaking because of His being a locus for speech and, therefore, there is no difference between our statements: He is speaking, and speech subsists in Him. Likewise, there is no difference between our statements: He is not speaking, and speech does not subsist in His essence. This is exactly analogical to His being "sound-producing" and "moving". If our statement, speech does not subsist in His essence, is predicated of God, thus our statement, He is not speaking, would be rightly predicated of Him, because both[124a] statements are an expression of one meaning. The unheard-of thing is their doctrine that will exists in no locus. If it is possible that one of the attributes would exist not in a locus, then it should be possible that knowledge, power, blackness, motion, and even speech, can exist in no locus. For that matter, why do they single out sound as being created in a locus?, let it be created in no locus too. If sound cannot be conceived of except in a locus because it is an accident and property, likewise is will (*irādah*). Conversely, you say that if He creates speech in no





locus and will in a locus, the thesis and antithesis will be the same.

But since the creation of the first creature requires will and since the locus is created, they could not judge the locus of the will to be existent before the will because there is no locus before will except God's essence (*dhāt*). But they do not make Him a locus for contingent things though those who think of Him as a locus for contingent things are closer [to being sensible] than they are. Therefore, the absurdity of the existence of a will in no locus, the impossibility of His being willing through a will that does not subsist in Him, and the absurdity of the occurrence of a contingent will through no will,[125a] can be perceived axiomatically by the intellect or by its sober investigation. These are three evident absurdities. As for the absurdity of His being a locus for contingent things, this could not be perceived except through detailed logical demonstration as we shall make clear.

## Note

1. See notes on *Will* and *Speech*.

## *Chapter IX*

## THE THIRD PROPERTY

All the attributes are eternal, because if they were originated, the Eternal ***a parte ante*** would be a locus for contingent things which is absurd, or He would be qualified by an attribute which does not subsist in Him, and this is even more absurd as has already been mentioned.[1] Nobody ever claimed the origination of [the attributes] "Life" and "Power". They do believe, however, in "the origination" of the knowledge of contingent things, divine will, and divine speech.[2] We point to the absurdity of His being a locus for contingent things from three perspectives.

First, every contingent thing can possibly exist. The ***sempiternal a parte ante*** is a *Necessary Being* (*Wājibu-l-Wujūd*) and if His attributes were [objects] of possibility, this would be contrary to His necessary existence because possibility and necessity are two contradictory matters.[3] It is impossible for a Necessary Essence (*Wājibu-dh-Dhāt*) to possess possible attributes. This is self-evident.

The second aspect is the strongest of all three If it could be supposed that contingent things reside in [God's] essence, it would not be without: either the imagination would ascend to a contingent thing, the existence of a contingent thing before it being impossible, or it would not ascend. Nay, before every[126a] contingent thing it should be possible that there be a contingent thing. If the imagination does not ascend to this, then His qualification by contingent things





eternally would necessarily be possible. This would eventually lead to a chain of contingent things that have no beginning and the proof of its impossibility has been furnished. No sane person has maintained this part of the argument. But if the imagination leads to a contingent thing,[127a] the origination of a contingent thing before it being impossible, then that impossibility of the originated thing, being receptive to the contingent thing in itself, would not be without its being an impossibility either because of the contingent thing ***per se*** or because of something distinct from it [i.e. because of something distinct from the ***ḥādith***]. It is absurd, however, that it be because of something distinct from it, because every distinct thing that may be supposed [to exist] its non-existence could also be supposed, which leads to a chain of contingent things ***ad infinitum***; and it is absurd. What remains, therefore, is that the impossibility of this is in view of the thesis that the ***Necessary Being*** is qualified by an attribute that makes impossible the reception of contingent things because of His essence. If this is impossible ***ab eterno vis-a-vis*** His essence, then it would be absurd that the impossible be transformed into possible, and this is on the same level as the impossibility of His being receptive to colour [i.e. mutation], eternally—for that [i.e. reception of colour] characterises mortals because "God," according to His essence, is not receptive to colours [i.e. mutation] by the consensus of all wise men. That impossibility cannot be transformed into possibility; and likewise it is impossible that any contingent thing may reside in His essence.

***If it is said:***

This is negated by the origination of the world

because it was possible [*mumkin*] before its occurrence and the imagination cannot ascend to a time before which the occurrence of the world would be impossible although its occurrence within eternity is impossible. On the whole, we can say that its occurrence is not impossible.

*We say:*

This objection is false. We declare only as impossible the affirmation of an essence (*dhāt*) which shrinks from the acceptance of a contingent thing (*ḥādith*) because it is a necessary being, then changes to the possibility of accepting contingent things. The world does not have an essence (*dhāt*) before coming into being which can be qualified as either receptive to origination, or not receptive, so that it may change to the acceptance of the possibility of origination so much so that this objection to our argument would be valid.

Yes: this is required of the Mu'tazilahs' position when they say that the world has a (*dhāt*) whose non-existence[128a] (*'adam*) is eternal and which is receptive to origination which then occurs to it after it was not. According to our premise, this is not consequential. Our thesis is that the world is an act; that an eternal act is an absurdity because the eternal cannot be an act.

*Thirdly, we say:*

If we assume the subsistence of a contingent thing in His essence, He—before that contingent thing—would either be described by the contrary of that contingent thing, or He would be described as being separate from that contingent thing.[129a] If either that contrary or that separation were eternal, none of them





would be negated or made to cease to exist because eternal is incorruptible [i.e. is not an object of non-existence], and if either were a contingent thing, then there must be a contingent thing before it and before that contingent thing there must still be another *ad infinitum* which is absurd. This [absurdity] can be seen posited in a certain attribute such as the divine speech (*kalām*), for example.

As for the Karramites,[4] they maintain that He is speaking in sempiternity, meaning that He is powerful over the creation of speech in His essence, and that whenever He originates something in other than His essence (*dhāt*), He originates in His Essence His statement, "Be!" (*Kun*). He, therefore, must be silent before the creation of this statement and His silence, thus, would be eternal *a parte ante* (*qadīm*). If Jahm,[5] however, maintains that God creates in His essence knowledge (*'ilm*), He must surely be, before its creation, unaware of it [i.e. unaware of this *'ilm*] and therefore, His unawareness would be eternal.

*We say:*

Eternal silence and eternal unawareness could not possibly be negated in view of the aforementioned reasoning, viz. the impossibility of the annihilation of the eternal.

*If it is said:*

Silence is not a "thing" (*shay'*), but rather is the privation of speech, and unawareness is the privation of knowledge, ignorance and its other opposites. When [divine] speech exists, no "thing" (*shay'*) is negated because there is no "thing" (*shay'*) but the eternal essence which is eternal *a parte post* (*bāqiyah*), but another existent is added to it, which is speech and

knowledge. But if it be said that a "thing" (*shay'*) has become non-existent [because of the occurrence of speech], this is unacceptable. This is on the same level[130a] as that of the "existence of the world" for it negates the "eternal non-existence". But "non-existence" (*'adam*) is not a "thing" (*shay'*),[6] so that it may be described as being "eternal" and, therefore, its negation supposed.

Our answer to this claim is from two perspectives.

Firstly, those who claim that silence is the privation of speech and is not an attribute (*ṣifah*), that unawareness (*ghuflah*) is the privation of knowledge and is not an attribute, is like their claim that the colour "white" is the non-existence of the colour "black" and the rest of the colours, and is not a colour; that "rest" is the non-existence of "motion" and is not an accident. All this is absurd, for the very proof that points to the absurdity of the first [part of their claim] points to the absurdity of the second [part].

Our adversaries on this question acknowledge that "rest" is an attribute which is more than just the absence of "motion". Indeed, whoever claims that "rest" is the non-existence of "motion" [alone] will not be able to affirm the origination of the world. Therefore, if[131a] the appearance of motion after rest points to the origination of the moving thing; so would the appearance of speech (*kalām*) after silence point to the origination of the speaker,[132a] and no difference [between the two cases can be defended], because the very method employed in discerning that rest is a concept contrary to motion can be employed to show that silence is a concept contrary to speech, and that unawareness is a concept contrary to knowledge. If[133a] we perceive a difference between the two modes of an essence: when resting (*sākinah*) and when in motion (*mutaḥarrikah*); then the essence is perceivable in either mode and the difference between the two modes is perceivable. Now this difference is due to nothing but the disappearance of something and the occurrence of another because a "thing" (*al-shay'*) does not differ from itself which indicates that any recipient of a "thing" would not be free from that thing or of its opposite.[134a] This is applicable to speech (*kalām*) and knowledge. But it is not a corollary that there be a difference between the existence and non-existence of the world[135a] because in the case above, the existence of two essences was not a concomitant, while [in the case of the world] we do not perceive in both modes [i.e. in the modes of *'adam* and *wujūd*] one single essence to which existence occurs. Nay, the world has no essence before occurrence, while the eternal *a parte ante* has an essence before the occurrence of speech which is known in a mode different from the mode in which it [i.e. the essence] is known after the occurrence of the speech. The former [i.e. before occurrence of speech] is termed "silence" and the latter is termed "speaking" These are two different modes in which one-continuously-existing *dhāt* is perceived. The essence has a particular mode of being, an attribute and a mode by which it is "silent," just as it has a mode and an attribute by which it is "speaking," and it also has a being by which it is "resting," "moving," and "black and white". This parallelism is inescapably consistent.

Secondly, to finalise this argument [we propose

that], if it is acknowledged that silence is not a [positive] concept but rather is due to an essence that is separate from speech, then separateness from speech, surely, is a mode for the separate which would become non-existent[136a] once speech occurs. This mode of separateness, be it called non-existence, existence, attribute, or a particular mode of being (*hay'ah*) would be negated by speech. But the one negated is eternal and we have already mentioned that the eternal (*qadīm*) cannot be negated, whether it is an essence (*dhāt*), a mode (*ḥālah*), or an attribute (*ṣifah*). The impossibility [of its negation] is not because it is an essence alone; it is because it is eternal. To this one cannot object by the example of the non-existence of the world, on the ground that it also became annihilated despite its eternity,[137a] because the non-existence of the world is not an essence nor does it effect a mode for an essence, a mode which may be judged to alternate manners on the essence. The difference between the two is clear.

*If it is said:*

The accidents are numerous, and the opponents do not claim that the Creator, Praise be to Him, is a locus for the origination of any of them, such as colours, pain, pleasure, and others. The argument, however, concerns the seven attributes which you have mentioned. There is no dispute in the attributes of "life" and "power," but rather the dispute is on the three attributes of *speech*,[138a] *will*, and *knowledge*; included in the concept of knowledge are the attributes of "hearing" and "sight" amongst those who affirm them, that these three attributes should be originated. It is impossible that they subsist in other than Him





because then He would not be described by them and, therefore, they should subsist in His essence which necessitates His being a locus for contingent things.

Concerning the knowing of contingent things, Jahm maintains that it is a contingent attribute[7] because Allah, Most High, knows "now" that the world has existed before this [moment], that if in sempiternity, God knew that the world had existed, this would have been ignorance not knowledge, that if He did not know[139a] and "now" knows, then the contingency of knowledge would be shown by the fact that the world had existed before this [moment]. This applies to all contingent things.

As for will (*irādah*), Jahm maintains, it should be originated because if[140a] it were eternal, the object of will would be equally eternal with it, for whenever power and will are consummated, and all obstacles are done away with, the object of will should occur; how, he asks, could the object of will and power be delayed when there is no obstacle? For this reason the Mu'tazilah claim the origination of will in no locus and the Karramites claim its [i.e. will's] origination in His essence. The Karramites may express this by saying that He created an act of "creation" (*ījād*) in His essence at the time of the origination of every existent thing and that is due to will.

As for speech (*kalām*), they ask, how could it be eternal when it contains information about things past? How, they further ask, could He say in eternity, "We sent Noah to his people," when He did not create Noah yet? And how could He say in eternity, unto Moses, "Put off thy shoes, thou art in the holy valley," when He did not create Moses yet? And how could He

command and prohibit without there being an object of command or of prohibition? If this is absurd, then it became acknowledged by necessity that He commands and prohibits, such command and prohibition being impossible in eternity,[141a] then it would be decidedly known that He became Commander and Prohibitor after He was not. This is what is meant by His being a locus for contingent things.

*The answer. We say:*

When we solve this sophistry over these three attributes, there arises automatically an independent proof which negates His being a locus for contingent things. No one held such a view but for this sophistry which once examined would prove false, just as the theory which maintains that He is a locus for colours [i.e. mutation] and other [accidents] which no proof can justify His being described by them.

*We say, therefore:*

The Creator, Most High, knew in sempiternity of the existence of the world at the time of its existence. This knowledge is one attribute which requires decreeing in sempiternity the knowledge that the world "would be" and at the time of its existence, that it "is" and after, the knowledge that it "was". These modes occur consecutively on the world, and the world is always unveiled to God through this attribute while He does not change.[142a] Rather, what changes are the modes of the world. To illustrate this, we say: Let us suppose that one of us has acquired a knowledge before sunrise that Zayd would be coming at sunrise; that this knowledge did not cease but remained; that this one did not acquire any other knowledge at sunrise; what would the state of this person be at





the rise of the sun; would he be knowing that Zayd is coming or would he not be knowing? It is absurd that he should not be knowing because the remaining of knowledge is judged by [Zayd's] coming and at sunrise.[143a] Now that he knows that the sun has risen, he would necessarily be knowing of the coming [of Zayd]. If this knowledge continues[144a] after sunrise, he should certainly be knowing that [Zayd] has come. Therefore, one knowledge provides the comprehension that something is going to "be," it "is," and it "became". This example should help[145a] to understand God's eternal knowledge that necessitates the comprehension of contingent things in their different modes. Hearing and sight should be analogical to this because each[146a] one of them is an attribute by which the objects of sight and of hearing are made "seen" and "heard" clearly at the time of [their] existence without either attribute being originated or undergoing change, Indeed, the contingent things are the objects of hearing and of sight.[147a]

The decisive proof of this is that the difference between the modes of a single thing,[148a] in its categorisation to that which has *"become," "shall be,"* and *"is,"* could not exceed the difference between the different essences. If it is, of course, acknowledged that knowledge[149a] does not become multiplied by the multiplicity of the essences, how, then, could it [i.e. knowledge] be multiplied by the multiplicity of the modes of one single essence? And if one knowledge provides the comprehension of different and dissimilar essences, why should it be impossible that one knowledge would provide comprehension of the modes of a single essence in relation to the past and the future?

There is no doubt that Jahm does not attribute limitation to God's objects of knowledge and that he does not affirm infinite knowledges; therefore, the consequent of this is that he should admit one knowledge that is related to numerous and different objects of knowledge. How could it be improbable with respect to the modes of a single object of knowledge which He actualises? If a [individual] knowledge about every [individual] contingent thing occurs to Him, then that knowledge would not be free[150a] either from being an object of knowledge or from not being an object of knowledge. If it would not be an object of knowledge, this would be absurd because it is a contingent thing and if it is possible that there exists a contingent thing which He doesn't know although it is in His essence and it is more proper for Him to be aware of it, then that it is possible that He would not know the contingent things which are different from His essence is even more proper. But if it is an object of knowledge either he would be lacking another knowledge which in turn requires further knowledge, *ad infinitum*,[151a] which is absurd, or He would know the contingent thing and the *"knowledge"* of the contingent thing with that same knowledge thus making knowledge one essence having two objects of knowledge,[152a] one of them being its essence [i.e. of knowledge][153a] and the other being the essence of the contingent thing. This would unquestionably require the possibility of a single knowledge related to two different objects of knowledge. How, then, could it not be permissible that there be one knowledge which is related to the modes of a single object of knowledge and the preservation of the unity of that knowledge





and its freedom from mutation? This is inescapable.

As for will (*irādah*), we have already mentioned that its occurrence without another will is absurd, that its [will's] occurrence through [another] will would lead to infinite regress. [We have also mentioned that] the relation of the eternal will to contingent things is not absurd and that it is impossible that will be related to the eternal (*qadīm*), that the world is not eternal because will is related to its origination, not to its existence in eternity.[154a] All this has already been made clear. Al-Karrāmī, too, maintains that He creates in His essence an act of "creation" (*ījād*)[8] at the time of the origination of the world and thus the origination of the world is fulfilled at that time. Al-Karrāmī would be asked: And what specifies the *contingent act of creation* (*ījād ḥādith*) in His essence by that [particular] time? Would not that time in turn require another specifier? They [the Karramites] would be faced in their position of *ījād* with the same consequences of the Mu'tazilahs' position concerning the contingent will. And if some of them [i.e. some of the Karramites] maintain that that [*ījād*] is His saying, "Be" (*Kun*), which is a sound,[155a] this would be absurd from three perspectives:

One of these perspectives is the impossibility of the subsistence of sound[156a] in His essence.

The second is that His statement: "Be" (*Kun*) is originated also. If it occurs without His saying to[157a] "Be" "Be," then the world might as well occur without His saying to it, "Be" (*Kun*) If His statement: "Be" (*Kun*), in order for it to occur, requires another statement, this latter statement would, in turn, require a third one, and the third a fourth *ad infinitum*.

Furthermore, we should not debate with those whose intellects lead them to maintain that He creates in His essence His statement, "Be" (*Kun*), every time He creates something, thus bringing together thousands over thousands of sounds every moment. It is, of course, acknowledged that the letter (*nūn*) and the letter (*kāf*) cannot be pronounced simultaneously. The letter (*nūn*) should succeed the letter (*kāf*) because the combination of the two letters together is impossible and if they are combined together, but not in order, they would not make sense or constitute a speech. Just as it is impossible to combine two different letters, it is also impossible to combine two similar letters. And as it is unintelligible [to pronounce] instantly a thousand (*kāfs*), it is also unintelligble [to pronounce] the letter (*kāf*) and the letter (*nūn*) simultaneously. It is better for such people to ask God, Most High, to bless them with some intelligence than to dabble in intellectual speculation.

Thirdly, is His command, "Be" (*Kun*), an address[158a] to the world when it is in the state of non-existence or when it is in the state of existence (*wujūd*)? If it is an [address to the world] when it is in the state of non-existence, then the non-existent does not comprehend a command and, therefore, how could it comply by existing in response to His command, "Be"? And if [the command to the world] is when it is in the state of existence, the existent cannot be asked to "be." Consider, now, what God can do to one who goes astray from His right path, how one's feeble intellect leads one not to understand the meaning of God's Word: "His command, when He desires a thing, is to say to it 'Be,' and it is," and that God's Word is only





a metaphor denoting the efficacy of [the Divine] Power and its perfection. These are led by wrong understanding to these infamies. We seek God's protection from disgrace and scandal on the *Great Day of Fright*, the day when the consciences are unveiled, the hearts afflicted, and the veil of God shall be removed from the viciousness of the ignorant, when the ignorant who hold wrong views about the belief in God and His attribute will be told, "Thou wast heedless of this; therefore, We have now removed from thee thy covering, and so thy sight today is piercing."

As for speech (*kalām*), it is eternal and what they consider as improbable in His saying [to Moses], "Put off thy shoes," and His Word, "We sent Noah to his people," is an improbability which leans on their judging speech as sound, which is impossible to God, but [speech] is not impossible if the [theory] of "inner speech" is understood.

*We say:*

There subsists in God's essence information about sending Noah, the verbal expression of which, before sending him, is "We send," and after sending him, "We have sent." The term, naturally, differs according to circumstances but the concept that subsists in His essence remains unchanged. Its reality is that it is information related to an informer. That information is the sending of Noah at a particular time which does not change by the change in the modes as we have already mentioned when dealing with knowledge. Likewise, His Word, 'Put off thy shoes," is a statement which indicates "command". The command is a requirement and a demand that subsists in the essence of the commander, and for it to subsists in the

commander's essence, the presence of the one commanded is not a condition. But it is permissible that it subsists in his [i e. commander's] essence before the existence of the one commanded. If the one commanded comes into existence, he would be[159a] commanded by that same requirement without a further renewed requirement. For, many a person who has no son, as there would subsist in his essence a requirement for the quest of knowledge by his son, would estimate in his mind to say to his son: "Seek knowledge." This requirement would be effectuated in his mind on the assumption that the son would exist. If the son is to exist, and a mind is created for him as well as a knowledge of what is in the father's mind without the estimation of the composition of an audible statement, and if this requirement is to remain until the time when [the son] exists, then the son would know that he is commanded from his father's side to seek knowledge without a need for the resumption of a requirement to be renewed in the [father's] mind; rather that [initial] requirement remains. Yes, the custom is that a son would not have a knowledge [of what the father demands] except through a statement that indicates the inner demand [i.e. a statement that indicates what is in the father's mind]. The verbal statement,[160a] "Seek knowledge," would indicate the demand that is in himself [i.e. in the father's mind], whether that demand occurs at that time when his son exists or it was subsisting in his [i e. in his father's] essence before his son's existence. This is the way that the subsistence of command in God's essence should be understood; the statements indicating it [i.e. the command], being originated and the object of





indication [i.e. command itself] being eternal (*qadîm*). The existence of the objection of indication does not require the existence of the one commanded; but rather it imagines his [i.e of one commanded] existence since it is possible that the one commanded can be estimated to exist. But if its existence is impossible, the existence of the requirement may not be imagined by one who knows the impossibility of its existence. Therefore, we do not hold that a requirement to effect an act from that the existence of which is impossible subsists in God's essence; rather, the requirement should be directed toward that whose existence is possible; and this is not absurd.

*If it is said:*

Do you say that God, in eternity, is commanding and prohibiting? If you say He is commanding, how could He be commanding without there being one to command? And if you say, "No," then He becomes commanding after He was not.

*We say:*

Our friends [i.e. the Ash'arites] have differed on the answer to this question. Our choice [i.e. our view] is to say that this is an investigation, part of which is related to the meaning and the other part is related to the general application of the term linguistically. As for the share of the meaning, it has been clarified, viz. the eternal requirement is intelligible even thought it may precede the existence of the one commanded as in the case of the son. Rather, it should be asked whether the term "commanding"[161a] should be applied to Him after the one commanded exists and understands or should it be applied to Him before? This in any case, is a semantic question the

likes of which should not occupy a theologian. The truth of the matter is that it is permissible to apply it to Him just as it has been permitted to call God, Most High, "powerful" before the existence of the objects of power. They do not consider as remote a powerful agent who does not have an existent object of power. Rather, they hold that the *powerful* requires an object of power that is an object of knowledge and which is not existent. Likewise, the *commanding* requires an object of command[162a] which is an object of knowledge but not existent, while the non-existent's existence is an object of knowledge before [its] existence. Nay, a command requires contents of command, an object of command, and a commanding one, while the contents of command are non-existent. It should not be asked, how could He be commanding[163a] without contents of command, but it should be said that He has contents of command that are objects of knowledge and whose existence is not a condition; the condition is their non-existence. Nay, he who commands his son, by way of counselling, to do something and then dies, after which the son executes the will, such son would be described as having complied with the command of his father though the command is missing here and the commanding one himself is non-existent. But in spite of this, we do apply the phrase, "compliance with command". If the one commanded is not complying with the command, and neither is the command existent nor the commanding one, and, furthermore, if that command being a command[164a] did not require the existence of the contents of the command either, why should the existence of the one commanded[165a] be required? This much has





uncovered the share of both the term and the meaning which are our sole objects of investigation. This is the summation and analysis of what we have wanted to say concerning His being a locus for contingent things.

## *Notes*

1. Some of the Mu'tazilah, as we have pointed out, hold that some of the attributes are contingent such as the attribute of will.
2. See our note on *Knowledge*.
3. In note 5, Chapter I, we have cited Ibn Sīnā's concept of *al-Wājib*.
4. See note on *Karramites*.
5. Jahm ibn Ṣafwān is the head of a school which carried his name (al-Jahmīyyah) He was a Jabrite. See our note on *Jabrites*, and *al-Milal*, p. 60.
6. See *Maqālāt*, p. 181, and our note 22 in our Introduction.
7. See note 5, Chapter IX.
8. See our note on *Karramites*.

## Chapter X

# THE FOURTH PROPERTY

The names of God, Most High, which are derived from these seven attributes, are sempiternally (*azalan*) and eternally predicated of Him. He is, in eternity, Living, Knowing, Powerful, Willing,[166a] Hearing, Seeing, and Speaking. As for those ones which are derived[167a] for Him from actions, such as: sustainer (*rāziq*), creator (*khāliq*), raising one (*mu'iz*), and lowering one (*mudhil*), opinions have differed[168a] on whether they are predicated of Him in sempiternity or not. But even these, if the cover is removed from them, the impossibility of the differences on them would be shown.

On the whole the names which God applies to Himself are from four categories:[1]

*The first category* points to nothing but His essence such as existent;[169a] and these are predicated sempiternally and eternally.

*In the second category* are those which point to the essence together with a negative addition, such as [the name] "Eternal" *a parte ante* (*al-qadīm*), which indicates an existence not preceded by non-existence,[170a] and[171a] the "Eternal" *a parte post* (*bāqī*) which points to His existence [firstly] and the negation of non-existence from Him secondly. Likewise are the *"one"*[172a] which points to the existence and the negation of a partner (*sharīk*); the "All-Sufficient" (*ghanī*) which





points to the existence and negates need. Those, too, are predicated sempiternally and eternally because what is negated about Him is negated *per se* and such negation accompanies the essence perpetually.

*The third category* encompasses those which point to existence plus an attribute which is superadded to it from among the real attributes [*ṣifāt al-ma'nā*] such as "Living," "Powerful," "Speaking," "Knowing," "Willing," "Hearing," and "Seeing," as well as what is related to these seven attributes such as "Commanding," "Prohibiting," "Informing,"[173a] and their like. All those, too, are sempiternally and eternally predicated of Him by those who believe in the eternity of all the attributes.

*The fourth category* includes those which indicate existence in relation to an act of His acts such as the "Generous" (*jawād*), "Sustainer" (*rāziq*), "Creator" (*khāliq*), "Raising One" (*mu'iz*), "Lowering One" (*mudhil*) and their like. These are not agreed upon. Some maintain that they are predicated [of Him] sempiternally because if they were not to be predicated of Him, then His description by them would necessitate change. Others maintain that they are not to be predicated [of Him] because since there are no creatures in eternity, how could He be Creator? What removes the cover from this is that the sword in its sheath is called *sharp* (*ṣārim*). But at the moment of cutting it is called sharp by logical conclusion. But both cases have two different meanings. When the sword is in the sheath, it is sharp *in potentia*, and when it cuts, it is sharp *in actu*.

Likewise, the water in a glass and at the time of drinking is called thirst-quenching, yet these are two

different applications. The meaning of calling the sword sharp when it is in the sheath is that the characteristic by which the "cutting" is effected is present in the sword (*in potentia*). The lack of immediate cutting is not due to a shortcoming in the sword's essence, or its sharpness or readiness to be used, but rather it is due to a different matter, beyond its essence. In the same sense that the term "sharp" is applied to the sword in its sheath, the term "Creator" (*khāliq*) is applied to God in sempiternity. Creation is not actualised because of something new that was not in the essence (*dhāt*); rather, all that is conditional for the actualisation of an act is existent in sempiternity. But in the sense that the term *sharp* is predicated of the sword at the moment of cutting [i.e. by logical conclusion] it is not predicated of Him in sempiternity. This is the share of the meaning. It is, therefore, clear that those who say that this term [i.e. the term "Creator"] is not to be predicated [of Him] in sempiternity are right if they take it in the second sense. And those who hold that it is to be predicated in sempiternity are [also] correct if they mean the first meaning. If the cover is removed from this face of the problem, the dispute would be done away with.

This is all that we have intended to say concerning the cardinal point of the attributes. It has included seven claims. Three branches branched from the attribute of power, and five objections branched from the attribute of speech. Amongst the common properties of the attributes, four[174a] were found to be common to all of them. The total was close to twenty[175a] claims although the seven are the principal





claims. Every claim, however, was to be based on other claims which lead to its affirmation.

### Note

1. See our Chapter II.

## *Appendix*

## SIGLA

AK : MS. No. 4129/1 in Library of Dil ve Tarih-Cogvafya Fakultesi, Ankara Universitesi.

AS : MS. No. 2182 in the library of Ayasofiya.

BA : 650 in *Suleymaniye, Beşir Aga.*

## TEXTUAL NOTES

Note.—Numbers refer to the translation; the adopted readings can be discerned by comparing the translation with the variants and the 1962 Ankara edition of *al-Iqtiṣād Fil-I'tiqād.*

1a AK-30, BA-140 اصل الصفات = AS-18 اصل آحاد الصفات
2a AK 30, BA-140 محدث = AS-18 صانع
3a AK-30, BA-140 فى اعضاء نفسه الظاهرة
 = AS-18 فى اعضائه الظاهرة
4a AK-30 يدرك معرفتهالحس = AS-18 مدرك معرفتهالحس
 = BA-140 تدركهمعرفتهالحس
5a AK-30, BA-140 هذا مدركه ضرورة العقل
 = AS-18 هذا ندركه بضرورة
6a AK لذاته اولمعنى زائد
 = AS-18, BA-140 لذاته او لزائد عليه
7a AK-30 بها تهيا الفعل للفاعل = AS-19, تهيا بها الفعل للوجود
 = Ba-140 تهيا الفعل العاقل
8a AK-31, AS-19 فلم لم يكن المقدور
9a AK-31, BA-140 دورات = AS-19 حوادث





10a AK-31 استحال ان لا = AS-19 استحال الا يصدر
 = BA-140 استحال لا يصدر
11a AK-31, AS-19 اذا = BA-140 اذ
12a AK-31 فروع ثلاث = AS-19 ارجع فروع = BA-140 اربعة فروع
13a AK-31, BA-140 تقولون = AS-19 نقول
14a AK-31, AS-19 لعقيد = BA-140 تعير
15a AK-31 لوجوده وجوداً واجبا
16a BA-140 فهو انه قدر عدم
17a BA-141 و تعلقها به فهو
18a AS-19 العلم = BA-141 العالم
19a AS-19 ان نشترط غيره مع ذاته
20a BA-141 و
21a AS-19 او ينقلب
22a AS-19 فانا نسا ننكر لفى النظر فى اللفظ
23a AK-32 حكم
24a BA-141 عن
25a AK-33 و نستحيل ان لقول الله تعالى ينبقى ان يتعاطى
26a AS-20 من البطن
27a AK-33 المهندسون
28a AS-20 ولا شكل ثالث
29a AK-33 المستدير - - - احوى = AS-20 احوى المسدس
30a AS-20 والثالث ان اقرب الاشكال القابله للاشكال المستديره والاحتواء هو شكل المسدس
31a AK-33 تتلاصق
32a AK-33 تخلل بين النقوب
33a AS-20 و مسكنتهم الضعيفه
34a BA-142 ورسخو
35a AK-34, AS-21, BA-142 او الى الخلو عنهما
36a BA-142 القدرتين تنافيا الى اثبات مقدور
37a AK-34 وجدت الا شياء بقدرته
38a AS-21, BA-142 و كانت القدرة والمقدور جميعا
39a AS-21, BA-142 لهذا الخط من التسميه
40a BA-142 فان القدرة المخلوقه ان لم

41a AK-35 فان لم تكن بها لم تكن علاقة
= AS-21 فان لم يكن علاقته بها فلا يكن قدرة
42a AK-35, AS-21 فان القدرة عند كم تبقى اذا
= BA-142 فات القدرة عند كم اذا فرضت قبل الفعل فهل
43a AK-35 متعلقه بالعالم فى الاول = AS-21 متعلقه بالعالم فى الأزل
44a AS-21 و كذالك القادر به ويلزم
45a BA-143 علم وتوعها
46a AS-21 اذ النسبه لم تمتنع
47a AS-22 الحوادث
48a AK-36 حادث معه مشاهد فاما كونه
49a AK-36 بخلق الله
50a AS-22 لولم يكن الا رادة متولده من العلم
51a AK-36 خلق
52a AK-36, AS-22, BA-143 يجوز ان تنفک عن الا قتران
53a AS-22 فالقدرة من حيث ذاتها ايست قاصرة عن حلق الخرارة فى اليد عند مماسه الثلج بد لا من البرودة فاذا مايراه الخصم
54a AS-22 فلا يتصور فيه الألتراق = BA-143 فيتصور فيه الافتراق
55a AK-36 فيتصور فيه الاقتران اذا خرقت = AS-22
56a AK-37 قلنا اذاً فسرتم
57a AS-22 بما ليس بمقدور بقدرة
58a AS-22 ثم هوالعجز والتمانع
59a AS-22 و تذكره لا يولده
60a AK-37 و من علمه غيره فهو بذادته
61a AK-37 يعلم = BA-144 نعلم
62a AS-22 انه سيوجدها اولا يو جدها غير متناهيه
63a AK-38, BA-144 بل يعقل الممكنين و يعقل تساورهما
= AS-23 - - - بى نعقل - - - و نعقل
64a AK-38 فيكون للتعيين عله
= AS-23 فيكون المعين عليه و يكون العلم
= BA-144 بما بعاله فيكون التعيين عله
65a AK-38 لما اختص بها هذا الوقت
66a AS-23 ان العالم يوحد بذات الله تعالى وانه ليس





67a AS-23 فانهم لم يتخلصوا عن خصوصى الوقت و لم يتخلصوا عن خصوصى الصفات

68a AS-24 اى من الغرب الى الشرق
69a AK-40, AS-24, BA-145 انه مريد بها هجر
70a AS-24 و هو محال
71a AK-40 او سماء = BA-145 او سما
72a AS-24 و هذا هذيان
73a AK-41 عبر عن هذه الصفه بالعلم و العالم
74a AK-41 المغيبه
75a AS-25 اوهو نقص و كمال معا و جميع هذه الاقسام
76a AK-42, AS-25 القدر
77a AS-25 العاسق
78a AS-25 تدل
79a AK-42, AS-25, BA-146 سقوط الشهوة من معدته كمال اريد به انه كمال

80a AK-43, AS-26 فان العقل
81a AK-43 فهو واجب لوجود الخالق
82a AS-26 هو كلام الخالق
83a AK-43 كان المتكلم المحل
84a AK-43, AS-26, BA-147 ليس خارجا عن العلوم والارادات
85a AK-43 واكثر مانسميه كلام = AS-26 مالسميه
86a AS-26 وهو ايضا علم يتعلق به اللفظ
= AK-43 علم معلومه اللفظ
87a BA-147, AS-26 زعرف اللفظ الموضوع
88a AK-44, AS-27, BA-147 اما الى ارادة المأمور
89a AK-44, AS-27, BA-147 انه ارادة المأمور لانه
90a AK-44 ولا تأويل ان تقوم
91a AK-44 بمعصيته لا مرك
92a AK-44 و حجته معصية الأمر
93a AK-44, AS-27 فلو لا تصور الامر
94a AK-44, BA-148 فاذا ماامرت هذا لو
= AS-27 فاذا . . . و هذا لو
95a AK-44 زائدا على ما عدوه من المعانى

96a AS-27 فانه نوع كمال
97a AK-47 ما اراده المسلمون
98a AK-47 القرءان
99a AK-47 هل يتصور
100a AS-29 وهى ثلثه احكام
101a AK-48 ذوات قدرعه متعددة
102a AK-48 فان العقل يعقل
103a AK-49 عنه
104a AK-49 فقد يسا عدهم
105a AK-49 قولكم امر
106a AK-49 كل نبى
107a AS-29 بالعرض بغير ذلك العلم
108a AK-49, AS-29 المحصلين = BA-150 المخلصين
109a AK-49, AS-29, BA-150 كاع
110a AK-50 مضطر الى ان يعرف
111a AK-50 اختلاف الحركة والسواد
112a AK-50 من جهة تغاير المتعلق
113a AK-50, BA=151 فيوجب ان يكون العلم
114a AK-50 و هو ان لا توجب تباين
= AS-30 وهذا لا يوجب تباين
115a AS-30 اختلاف ما لسبت اختلاف
116a AK-50 بطرفيه المقابلين له
117a AK-50 و تقليل الا شكال = BA-151 و تعليل الأشكال
118a AS-30 و تقدير الا شكال ممكن قطعه بالكلية
119a AK-51 AS-30 لانهم لا يثبتون
120a AS-30 فى دماغ غير متكلم موصوف
= BA-151 فى دماغ غيره موصوفا
121a AS-30, BA- 51 الصفات الا لهيه
122a AK-51 كما لا يقال للفقه غرالفقيه = BA-151 الفقه غير الفقيه
123a AK-52 و مفهوم قولنا مريد
124a AK-52, BA-151 بمتكلم لانهما عبارتان عن
125a AS- 1 حدوث ارادة حادثه بلا ارادة
126a AK-52, AS-31 بل كل حادث فيجوز





127a AK-52, AS-31 حاله
128a AS-32 ذات فى القدم قدرعه
129a AK-53 او بالا لفكاك عن ذلك الحادث و ذلك الضد او ذلك الضد
او ذلك الا نفكاك
= AS-32 و ذلك الضد و الانفكاك MS is defective here
130a AS-32 فلا و بدليل وجود العالم
131a AS-32 حدث العالم لظهور الحركه
132a AK-54 حدث الكلام
133a AK-54 وهو انا ادركنا
134a AS-32 فلا يخلو عن ضده و هذا
135a AK-54, AS-32, BA-153 العالم
136a AK-54 يتقدم بطريان الكلام
137a AK-54 فانه انتفى عند الوجود = AS-32 سعى مع العدم
138a AK-54, BA-153 الكلام
139a AS-32 واذا لم يكن عالما
140a AS-32 لكانت قدرعه وكان المراد
141a AK-55 العدم
142a AK-55 وهو لم يتغير و انما المتغير
143a AK-55 قدر بقاء العلم بالقدوم عند الطلوع
144a AK-55 ولو رآه عند انقضاء الطلوع
145a AK-55 فهكذا ينبغى ان يقاس تفهم علم الله
146a AK-55, AS-33, BA-153 فان كل واحد منهما
147a AS-33, BA-153 الحادث المسموع والمرئ
148a AK-55, AS-33, BA-153 بين احوال شئ واحد
149a AK-55, AS-33 العلم لا يتعدد بتعدد الذوات فكيف
150a AK-55, AS-33, BA-153 لكان ذلك العلم لا يخلو اما
151a AK-55 يفتقر الى علوم اخر لا نهايه لها
152a AK-55 اوله معلومان
153a AS-33, BA-153 احد هما ذاته والاخر ذات الحادث
154a AS-33 لا بوجوده فى العدم
155a AS-33 وهو ضرب من المحال
156a AK-56, AS-33 استحالة قيام القول بذاته
157a AK-56, AS-33 يقول لكن كن

158a AS-34 ان قوله خطاب فلا يخلو
159a AK-57 وكان مامورا
160a AS-34, BA-154 فيكون قوله بلسانه
161a AK-57 اسم الآمر
162a AS-34 فكذلك الآمر يستدعى مقدوراً
= BA-154 مأموراً ... الآمر ...
163a•AK-57 ولا يقال كيف يكون امر
164a AK-57 ولم يستدع كون الامر آمراً وجود
165a AS-34 وجود المأ مور به فقد انكشف
166a AK-57 قادراً مريداً سميعاً
167a AK-57 فاما مايسبق له
168a AS-34, BA-154 فقد اختلف
169a AK-58, AS-34, BA-155 قسم لا يدل الا على ذاته كالموجود
170a AS-34 و كالقديم فانه يدل على القدم
171a AK-58 و كالباق
172a AK-58 و كالوجود
173a AK 58, BA-155 والمخبر
174a AS-35, BA-155 ثلثه احكام
175a BA-155, AK-58 من عشرين دعوى وهى اصول الدعاوى



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